

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 270 273

RC 015 779

TITLE Beadwork for Children/Weegwahs: An Ojibwe Story and Activities Using Birch Bark.

INSTITUTION Minneapolis Public Schools, Minn.

SPONS AGENCY Minnesota State Dept. of Education, St. Paul. Indian Section.

PUB DATE Jun 79

NOTE 75p.; Appended photographs may not reproduce clearly.

AVAILABLE FROM Special School District No. 1, Minneapolis Public Schools: Planning, Development and Evaluation, 807 Northeast Broadway, Minneapolis, MN 55413-2398 (\$17.25 ea., plus \$5.00 billing charge unless prepaid).

PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.

DESCRIPTORS Activity Units; American Indians; *American Indian Studies; *Art Activities; Cultural Activities; *Cultural Awareness; Cultural Background; Design Crafts; Elementary Education; *Handicrafts; *Learning Activities; Resource Units

IDENTIFIERS *Beadwork; *Birch Bark; Ojibwe (Tribe); Plains Indians (Anthropological Label)

ABSTRACT

Two resource units give elementary students an understanding of American Indian arts and crafts. The first unit consists of seven beading activities for early elementary students using beads the teacher and/or students make themselves. The unit gives a short history of American Indian beadwork, describes the materials and designs used by Plains and Woodland tribes, and provides activity learning objectives, directions for teachers, a vocabulary list, an evaluation checklist, and a resource list. Activities include making macaroni beads, straw beads, paper beads, clay beads, baked beads, rosettes, and bracelets formed on shoebox looms using 1 of 13 patterns. The second unit gives characteristics and uses of birch bark by the Ojibwe tribe, learning objectives for the activities, directions for teachers, a vocabulary list, an evaluation checklist, and a resource list. An Ojibwe legend told to children relates how birch bark came to be used. A discussion sheet on the qualities of birch bark and eight activities on using birch bark are provided. Activities include making a birch bark plaque, basket, transparency, folded cutouts, floral designs, owl, canoe, and muhkuk. (LFL)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ED270273

Beadwork for Children/

Weegwahs: An Ojibwe Story

and

Activities Using Birch Bark

Minneapolis Public Schools
Indian Elementary Curriculum Project

June 1979

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Minneapolis
Public Schools

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

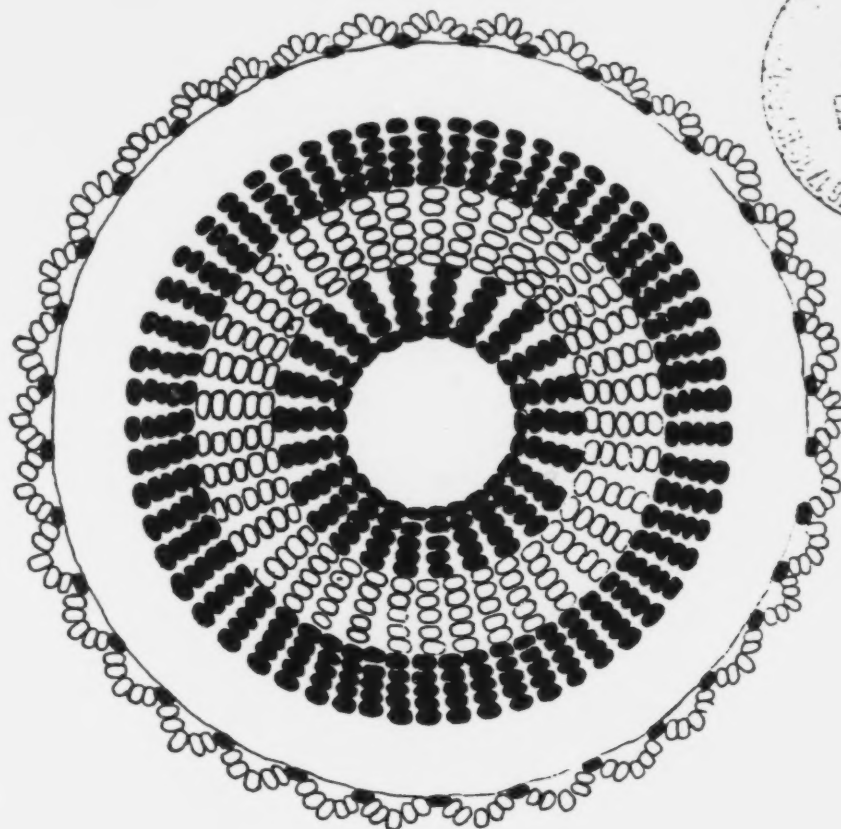
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.
☒ Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy.

RC 015 779

BEADWORK



FOR CHILDREN

RC015779

The Minneapolis Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or disability.



Minneapolis Board of Education
Marilyn A. Borea, Chairperson

W. Harry Davis	Carol R. Lind	John M. Mason
Philip A. Olson	James W. Pommerenke	Jane A. Starr

Superintendent of Schools
Raymond G. Arveson

Special School District No. 1

MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

An Equal Opportunity School District
1979

The Indian Elementary Curriculum Project was made possible by funds from the State of Minnesota's American Indian Language and Culture Act.

First Printing, June, 1979

INDIAN ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM PROJECT STAFF:

FULL-TIME:

Paulette Fairbanks, Project Administrator
Christine Gale, Clerk-Typist
Kay Gamble, Teacher on Special Assignment
Nancy Hands, Teacher on Special Assignment

PART-TIME:

Diana Beaver, Student Intern
Mike Blake, Illustrator
Larry Blue, Illustrator
Diane Leecy, Student Intern
Nina Ross, Student Intern
Carolynn Schommer, Dakota Language Instructor
Kathleen Westcott, Student Intern
Susan Weyaus, Ojibwe Language Instructor



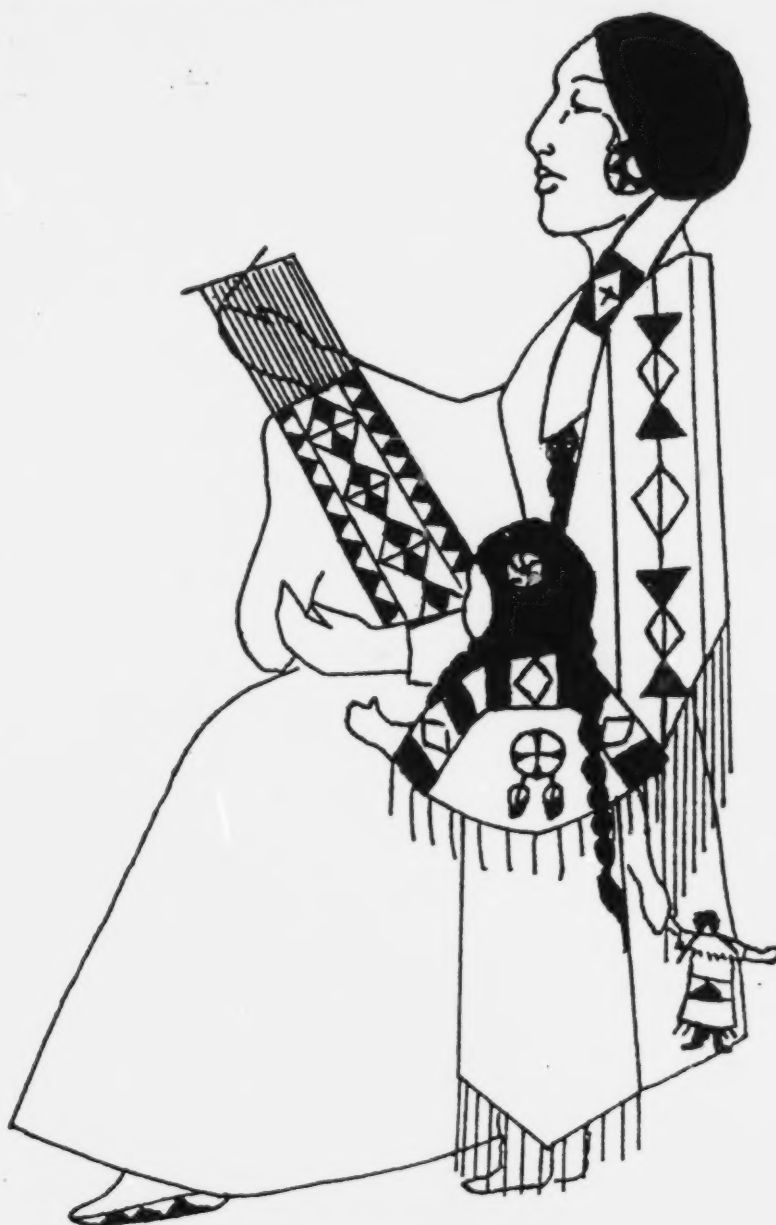
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	1
Introduction	2
I. Objectives	3
II. Materials Needed	3
III. Directions and Procedures for Teachers	3
IV. Concepts and Vocabulary	4
V. Activity Variations	4
VI. Evaluation	5
VII. Resources	6
Activity One: Macaroni Beads	7
Activity Two: Straw Beads	8
Activity Three: Paper Beads	9
Activity Four: Clay Beads	10
Activity Five: Baked Beads	11
Activity Six: Rosettes	12
Activity Seven: Loomwork	14

FOREWORD

This unit, *Beadwork for Children*, consists of introductory beading activities for early elementary students. Most of the activities utilize beads the teachers and/or students can make themselves.

It is recommended that teachers consult the list of resources provided in the unit for more information about beadwork and designs.



INTRODUCTION

Indian people have long used beads of all shapes, sizes and materials to decorate their belongings. They used materials such as bone, seeds, berries, shells, stone, animal claws, hooves and teeth to make beads. Sewing implements were also taken from the environment. For example, awls made out of fish or animal bones served as needles while animal sinew served as thread. Porcupine quills were dyed different natural colors from plants and stitched onto belongings in different designs. This work was intricate and required a good deal of skill. The beads of whatever material or shape (circular, cylindrical, conical, oval, etc.), were all made with a small hole to be strung or sewn to an article. Today, many of the same materials are used. However, contemporary materials are also utilized for both tools and beads.

Contact with Europeans who came to this country resulted in the use of glass seed beads by Indian people. Many of the first Europeans were traders and trappers of animal furs. They traded brightly colored Venetian glass seed beads for land and animal furs. The trade value of beads varied. According to William Orchard in a study based on materials in the Heye Foundation Museum of the American Indian, the most expensive was a large light blue bead which brought three beaver skins. For beads of other sizes and colors, one bead was traded for two animal skins.¹

Seed beads are small in size, approximately 1/16 inch in diameter and usually strung on long threads. Several strings of beads are grouped together to make a hank. Seed beads are also sold by the pound or in small tubes or plastic packages. The sizes of seed beads vary. They are numbered according to their size. Seed beads range in size usually from ten to sixteen, the larger the number, the smaller the bead. Today, most seed beads are made of plastic. However, cut glass beads may still be purchased, but they are expensive and becoming more rare.

There are larger beads than seed beads called pony beads and crow beads. Pony beads are approximately 1/8 inch in diameter, while crow beads are larger. Pony beads are usually made of plastic, while crow beads are made of glazed glass.

Three types of beadwork are discussed in this unit: 1) loom; 2) flatwork (rosettes and beads sewn directly to clothing); and 3) chaining (stringing beads in such patterns as daisy chains and zig-zag stitches).

Woodland tribes such as the Ojibwe, Menominee, Ottawa, Winnebago and Cree often use floral designs in their beadwork. Plains tribes such as the Lakota and Crow often use geometric designs. Time period, individual styles, intertribal contacts, and location changes all influenced the designs used by craftspeople and overlapping does occur. Just as Indian people of various tribes utilized materials from their environment, so they used designs in beadwork which reflected their surroundings. For further information about beadwork, see Section VII, Resources. Beading techniques are intricate and varied. The information provided above is intended only as a brief introduction for use with this unit.

¹ William C. Orchard. *Beads and Beadwork of the American Indians*. (New York: Museum of the American Indian, 1975), p. 102.

I. OBJECTIVES

A. Given the introduction:

1. The students will correctly state that a bead is an object of any size, shape, color or texture made with a hole or opening that may be strung or sewn;
2. The students will identify four materials used by Indian people to make beads (bones, seeds, berries, animal claws, hooves, and teeth);
3. The students will identify a type of bead introduced by traders (glass seed beads or cut glass beads);
4. The students will compare and contrast how beading differed in the past and present (materials, trading, dyes, designs, etc.);
5. The students will correctly identify two types of beads that are larger than seed beads (pony and crow);
6. The students will correctly identify three basic types of beadwork discussed in this unit (loom; flatwork; and chaining);
7. The students will correctly give examples of two designs frequently used by woodland and plains tribes (floral and geometric).

B. Given examples of beadwork, the students will correctly identify designs (flowers, leaves, geometric shapes, and others).

C. The students will correctly identify the sequence and pattern of each of their beadwork assignments.

II. MATERIALS NEEDED

Activity sheets One through Seven.

III. DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS

- A. Discuss the introduction with the students, emphasizing the following: definition of a bead; materials traditionally used by Indian people to make beads; introduction of two large beads (pony and crow); three basic types of beadwork; identification of two designs frequently used by woodland and plains tribes; and how beading in the past differed from that done today.
- B. Show examples of beadwork and have the students describe them by color, design, shape, size and other characteristics.
- C. Use the beadwork activities to reinforce the following skills: counting; discriminating differences in size, shape, color, and texture; measuring; and sequencing.
- D. Have the students complete the assigned activities.

IV. CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

- A. Bead — an object of any size, shape, color or texture with a hole or opening that may be strung or sewn.
- B. Crow bead — a large bead, usually made of glazed glass.
- C. Design — the pattern or motif of an artistic work.
- D. Loom — a frame used for doing beadwork.
- E. Pattern — a design, especially for decorating a surface, composed of a number of elements or objects arranged in a regular or formal manner.
- F. Rosette — beads sewn onto material in a circular fashion, usually backed with animal hide.
- G. Row — a number of beads arranged in a line, especially a straight line.
- H. Sequence — the following of one thing after another.
- I. String — a slender cord or thick thread for binding or tying.

V. ACTIVITY VARIATIONS

- A. Have the students collect pine cones, acorns, seeds, bones, shells and other materials from the environment. Have them string the natural objects into a bracelet or necklace or alternate them with other types of beads.
- B. Combine several types of beads made in this unit into a bracelet or necklace.
- C. Take students on a field trip to an art institute or museum with displays of beadwork.
- D. Use beadwork designs on bulletin boards and around the classroom. Place designs on overhead transparencies for student viewing.
- E. Have the students separate beads by size, texture and color.

VI. EVALUATION

- A. Did the students state that a bead is an object of any size, shape, color or texture with a hole or opening that may be strung or sewn?
- B. Did the students identify four materials used by Indian people to make beads?
- C. Did the students identify a type of bead introduced by traders?
- D. Did the students compare and contrast how beading differed in the past and present?
- E. Did the students identify two types of beads that are larger than seed beads?
- F. Did the students identify three basic types of beadwork discussed in this unit?
- G. Did the students identify floral and geometric as two designs frequently used by woodland and plains tribes?
- H. Did the students correctly identify designs when given examples of beadwork?
- I. Did the students identify the sequence and pattern of each of their beadwork assignments?

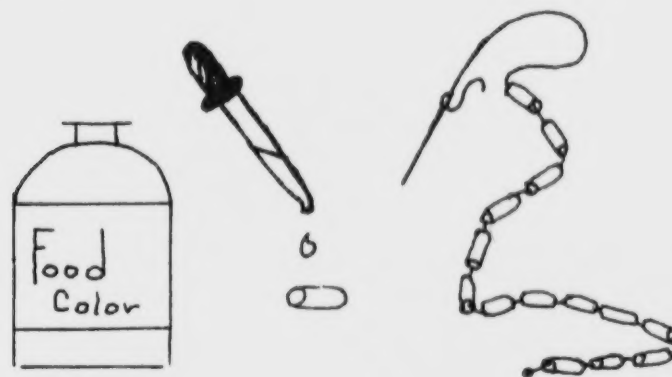
VII. RESOURCES

- Amiotte, Arthur. *Art and Indian Children of the Dakotas*. Aberdeen, South Dakota: Educational Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1978.
- Children's Crafts*. A Sunset Book. California: Lane Publishing Co., 1976, pp. 86-87.
- Contemporary Sioux Painting*. (A Slide Lecture Kit.) Rapid City, South Dakota. Tipi Shop, Inc., Box 1270, 1971.
- Densmore, Frances. *Chippewa Customs*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Ross and Haines, Inc., reprint 1970.
- Flint Institute of Arts. *The Art of the Great Lakes Indians*. Flint, Michigan: Flint Institute of Arts, 1973.
- Fox, Mary Lou. *Ojibwe Designs Used in Beadwork-Quillwork*. Manitoulin Island, Ontario; Ojibwe Culture Foundation, West Bay Indian Reserve, Department of Indian Affairs.
- Fox, Mary Lou and Wassegijig, Helen (compiled by). *Ojibwe — Odawa Motifs*. Manitoulin Island, Ontario: Ojibwe Cultural Foundation, 1978.
- Hofsinde, Robert. *Indian Beadwork*. New York: Signette Books, 1971.
- Lyford, Carrie A. *Ojibwe Crafts*. Washington, D.C.: Branch of Education, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1943.
- Lyford, Carrie A. *Quill and Beadwork of the Western Sioux*. Washington, D.C.: Branch of Education, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1940.
- McCall's Crafts, Volume I, *Children's Projects*. New York: The McCall Pattern Co., 1976, pp. 57-59.
- Murphy, Marjorie. *Beadwork from American Indian Designs*. New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 1974.
- Ojibwe Beadwork for Young Children*. Cass Lake, Minnesota: Tri-State ICAP, Inc., Box 26, 1974.
- Orchard, William C. *Beads and Beadwork of the American Indians*. New York: The Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, 1975.
- Orchard, William C. *The Techniques of Porcupine Quill Decoration Among the Indians of North America*. New York: The Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, 1971.
- Schneider, Richard. *Crafts of the North American Indians*. New York: Van Nostrand and Reinhold Co., 1972.
- Stribling, Mary Lou. *North American Indian Arts*. New Jersey: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1975.
- Walker Art Center and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. *American Indian Art: Form and Tradition*. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc. 1972.
- White, Mary. *How to do Beadwork*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1972.

ACTIVITY ONE: MACARONI BEADS

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Salad macaroni (different shapes and sizes)
2. Food coloring for dye (different colors)
3. String or yarn



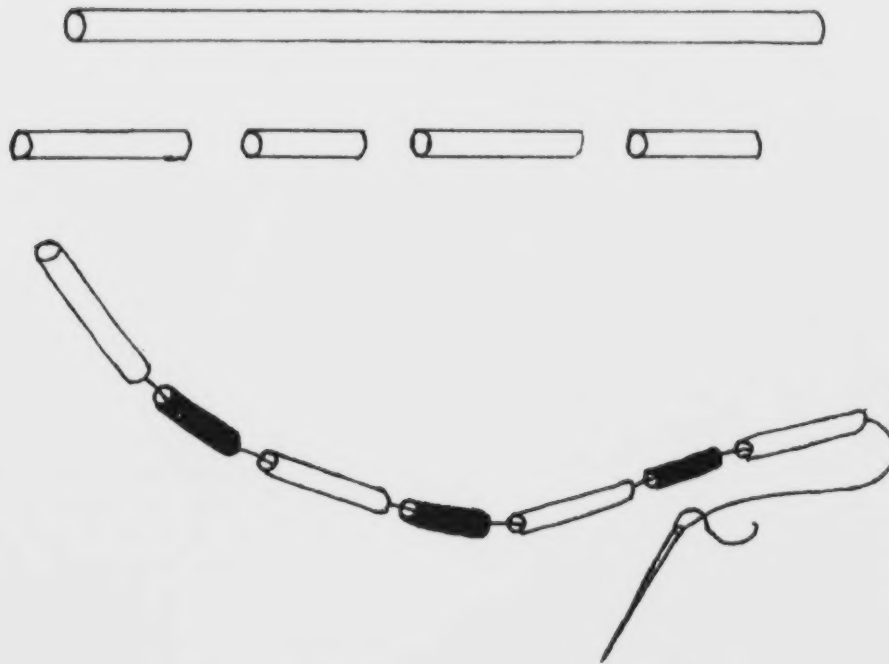
DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS

1. Dye the macaroni a variety of colors. This may be done in advance or with the students. Place the macaroni in a paper cup, add a few drops of food coloring, and stir. After the macaroni has been dyed, spread it on newspaper to dry. Allow at least two hours for drying.
2. Prepare macaroni necklaces or bracelets by stringing them in advance to demonstrate distinct patterns to the students.
3. Before starting the beading activity, mix the beads together and have the students sort them according to size, color, or both.
4. Have the students repeat a pattern you have shown them.
5. Have the students make their own pattern.
6. Upon completion of the activity, ask the students such questions as: How many red beads are in your necklace/bracelet? What is your pattern? How many times did you have to repeat it to make a necklace/bracelet?

ACTIVITY TWO: STRAW BEADS

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Colored drinking straws
2. Scissors
3. String or yarn



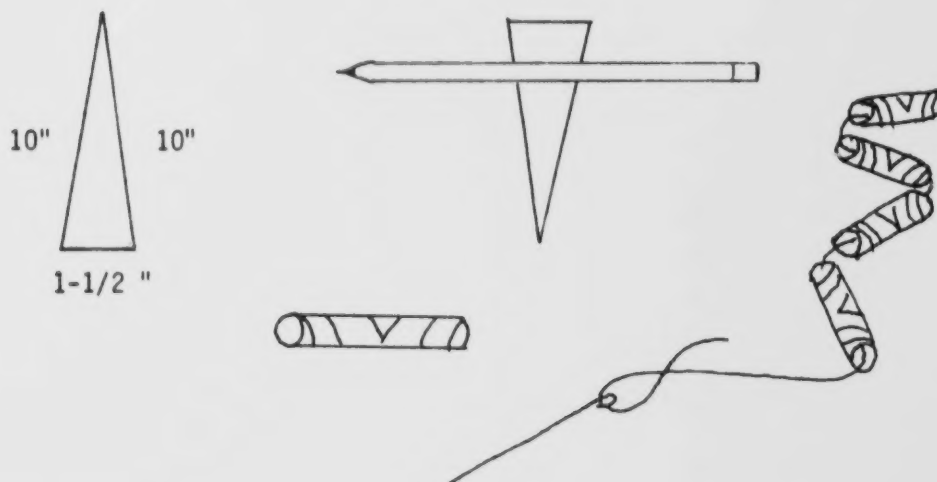
DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS

1. Cut some straws in advance into different sizes. String them into a necklace or bracelet to demonstrate to the students. Have them describe colors, sizes, and other characteristics.
2. Have the students measure and cut their own straws, sorting them by size. They can follow a pattern you provide or create their own.
3. After the students have completed necklaces or bracelets; have them count the number of beads used and identify colors and sizes.

ACTIVITY THREE: PAPER BEADS

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Strips of paper (wallpaper, Sunday comic strips, etc.) cut into long thin triangles (10" x 10" x 1-1/2"). (A shade of off-white paper could be used to imitate bone beads.)
2. Pencils for each student.
3. Paste for each student.
4. Yarn or string (the length depends on what each student makes, a bracelet or necklace).



DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS

1. Cut the paper into strips for younger children in the size indicated.
2. The paper beads are constructed in this manner:
 - A. Start with the wide end of the strip and roll it around a pencil.
 - B. Roll the strip around the pencil until only the point of the triangle remains. Put a small amount of paste on the end of the strip and hold it until it is securely attached to the rest of the bead; this will keep the bead from unrolling.
 - C. Slide the bead off the pencil.
 - D. Cover the beads with a non-toxic plastic finish to give them a shiny surface. (This is optional and should be done by an adult.)
3. After the appropriate number of beads is made, they can be strung onto yarn or string (the teacher may designate the number of beads to make for a counting exercise).

ACTIVITY FOUR: CLAY BEADS

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Cornstarch — 1 cup
2. Baking soda — 2 cups
3. Cold water — 1-1/4 cups
4. Food coloring for dye
5. String or yarn (the length depends on what each student makes, a bracelet or a necklace)
6. Nail or other object to make holes in the beads
7. Optional — non-toxic plastic finish



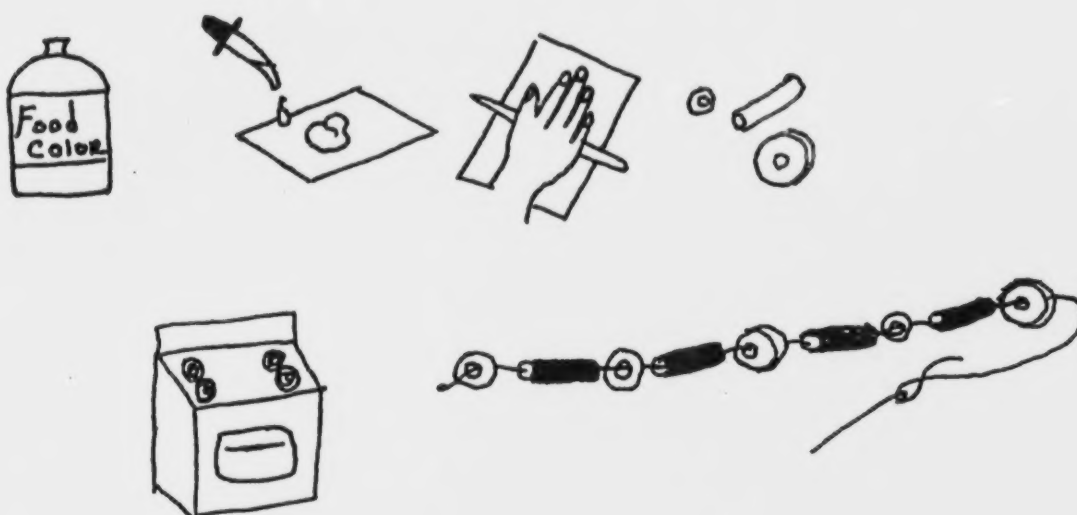
DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS

1. In a saucepan, combine cornstarch and baking soda then stir in water. Place over medium heat until the mixture reaches the consistency of moist mashed potatoes. Put the mixture on a plate and cover with a damp cloth until it cools. Do not let it stand too long, or the dough will harden and will not be workable. When cool enough to handle, divide the clay into small amounts and knead as you would dough, adding a few drops of food coloring to each portion.
2. Give each student small amounts of clay in various colors.
3. Have them make beads of various shapes. Some suggestions are round beads, disks, or tube beads. After the beads are shaped, make holes through the centers with a nail, toothpick, or other pointed object. (Make sure the holes are large enough so that students can string the beads.)
4. Set the beads aside and allow them to dry overnight.
5. When the beads are dry, have the students string them, mixing the bead sizes and colors to make a pattern.
6. Cover the beads with a non-toxic plastic finish for a shiny, protective surface (optional).

ACTIVITY FIVE: BAKED BEADS

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Flour — 1 cup
2. Salt — 1 cup
3. Water
4. Food coloring or poster paints
5. String or yarn
6. Nail or other object to make holes in the beads



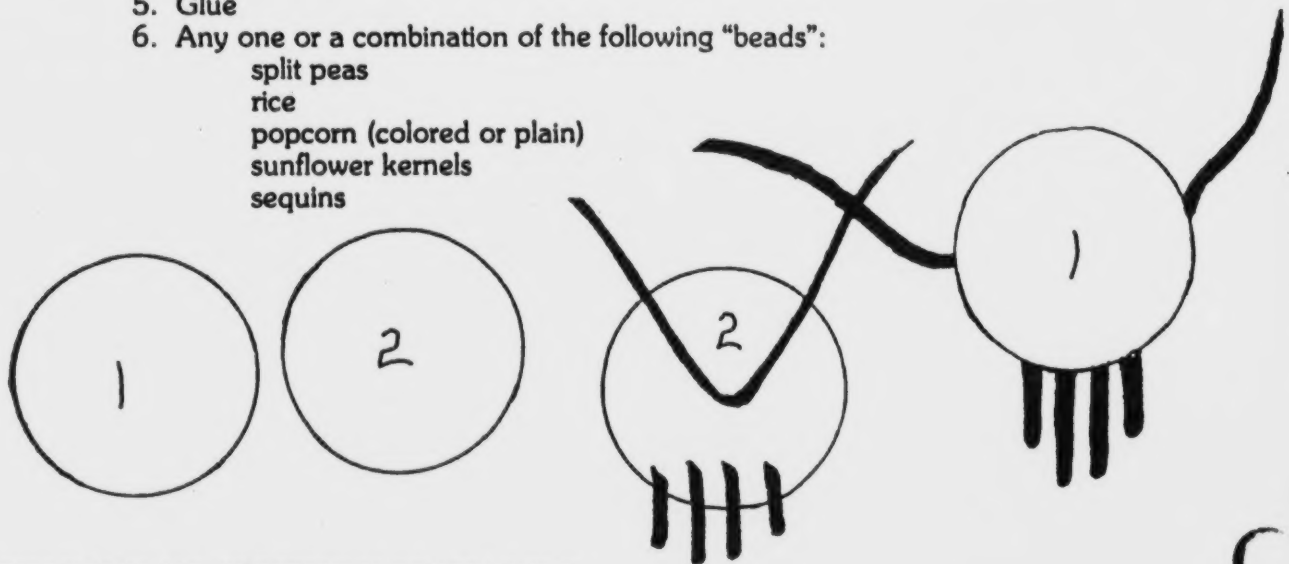
DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS

1. In a mixing bowl, combine flour and salt (use equal amounts of both).
2. Add enough water to these ingredients to make a mixture of clay consistency. Divide the dough into small amounts and color each portion by adding a few drops of food coloring. Or, if preferred, the dough can be painted after step four.
3. Give each student a small amount of dough. Roll the dough into beads of different sizes and shapes (disks, tubes, balls, figures, etc.) and make a hole in each bead. This can be done with a nail, toothpick, or other pointed object. Make sure the holes are big enough for the students to string.
4. Bake the beads in an oven at 200°. The baking time depends on the size of the bead (larger ones may take an hour or longer). Check them after five minutes.
5. If the dough is not dyed, paint the completed beads the colors desired.
6. Have the students string the beads to form a pattern.

ACTIVITY SIX: ROSETTES

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Food coloring for dye
2. Yarn, approximately 24" for each student
3. Cardboard, tagboard, or other heavy paper
4. Felt material
5. Glue
6. Any one or a combination of the following "beads":
 - split peas
 - rice
 - popcorn (colored or plain)
 - sunflower kernels
 - sequins



DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS

1. Show the students examples or pictures of beaded rosettes. From these examples, students can select colors and designs. Explain that rosettes are made by sewing beads into a circular fashion onto material. They are usually backed with animal hide.
2. Have the students draw designs and symbols on circles.
3. Dye "beads" by placing them in a paper cup. Add a few drops of food coloring, and stir. Spread them on newspaper to dry.
4. Distribute felt material, cardboard and yarn pieces to each student.
5. Trace a circle on cardboard and cut out. Trace two circles of the same size on felt material and cut out. Glue the felt circles to each side of the cardboard, placing the 24" length of yarn between the felt and cardboard for the necklace. Small pieces of yarn may be added to the bottom for fringe by gluing them between the felt and the cardboard.
6. Have the students first draw their designs on paper and then on the felt material.
7. Paste the "beads" on the felt material to make a design.
8. The rosette may be covered with a non-toxic plastic finish to give it a shiny, protective surface.



ACTIVITY SEVEN: LOOMWORK

(BRACELET MAKING)

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. "Make a Beadwork Pattern" page 18, duplicated and disseminated to each student
2. Patterns A through F, pages 20-25, duplicated and disseminated to each student
3. Shoeboxes or picture frames to make looms for each student²
4. Tapestry needles
5. Thread — approximately 36" for weaving the beads onto the loom and enough for stringing each loom (the amount will depend upon the size loom used). Beading thread or heavy waxed thread is recommended.
6. Crow beads — 45 for each student
7. Crayons

DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS

This activity consists of the steps necessary for completing a loom made bracelet, five beads across by nine beads long. It is recommended that a bracelet be prepared in advance to show the relationship between graphing and loom beading. It is further recommended that students practice repeating patterns and making original designs before the actual beadwork is attempted. Explain to the students that the graphing corresponds to the number of rows and strings on the loom required for the bracelet. Steps to follow in the activity are graphing, stringing the loom, loom beading, and completing the bracelet.

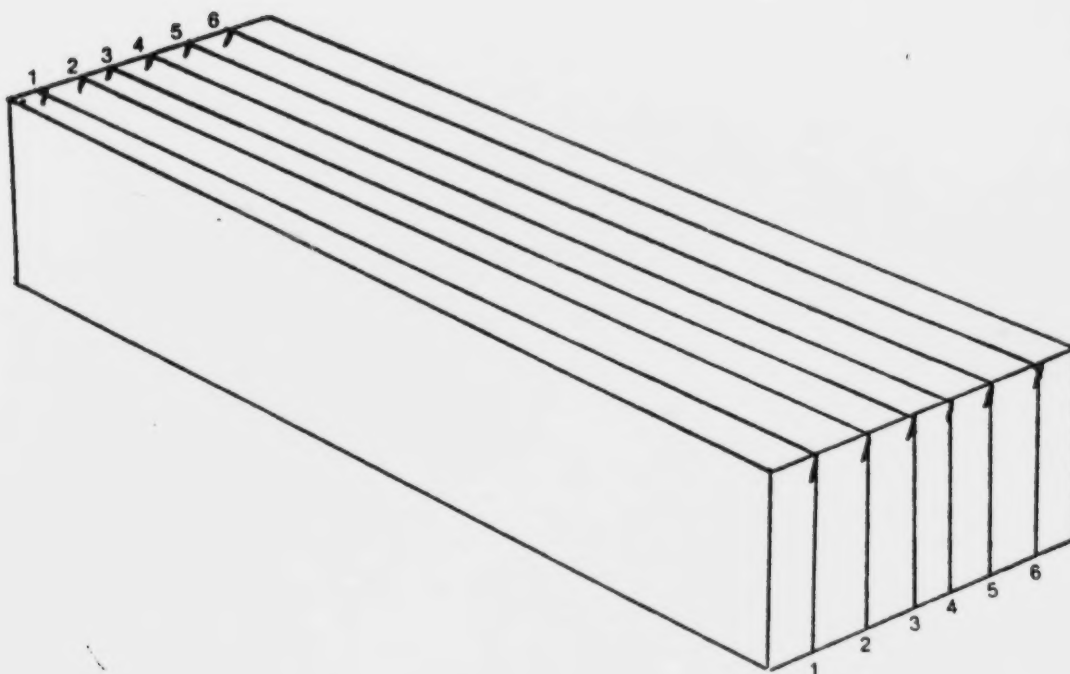
1. Graphing

- A. Have the students complete "Make a Beadwork Pattern". Directions are provided.
- B. Check the work to make certain each child has a distinct design and that the colors do not merely run together.
- C. For a variation, provide the students with smaller graph paper and have them make intricate designs using more colors and beads.
- D. Once a pattern has been selected for the loom bracelet making, have the students draw it on graph paper, identifying the number of beads (45) and colors needed.

² Potholder looms work well for the bracelet making; another alternative for looms would be to have a school wood shop construct them.

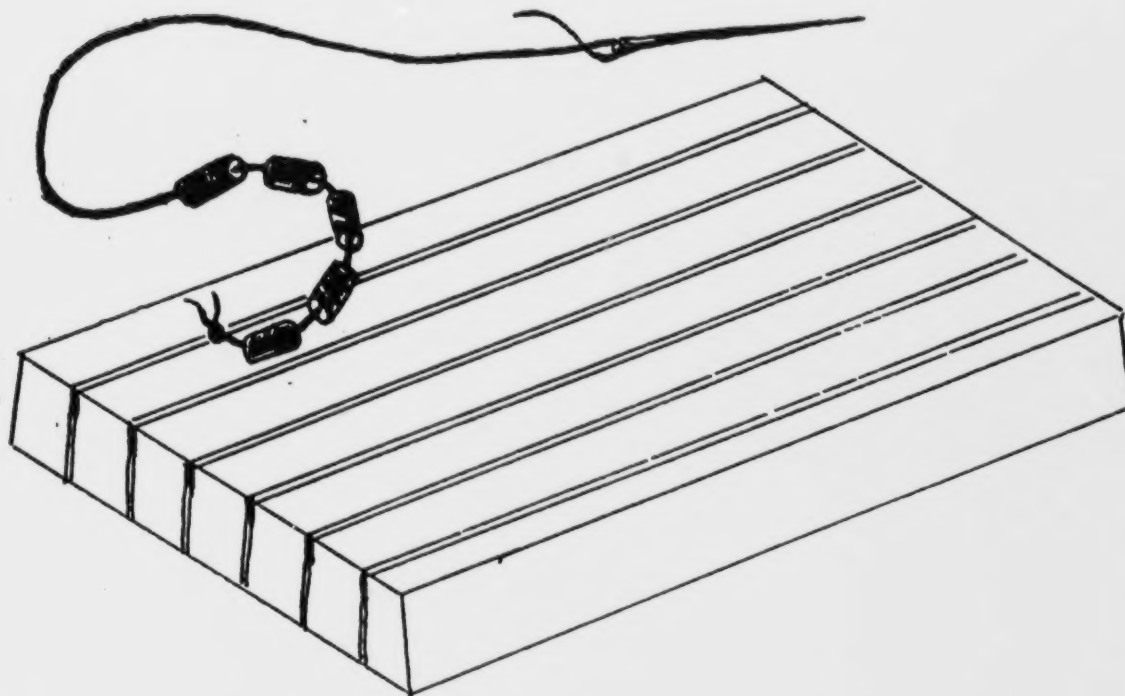
2. Stringing the loom

- A. Prepare the shoebox looms by making six notches $\frac{1}{2}$ " deep and $\frac{3}{8}$ " apart on each end of the shoebox with a knife or razor blade.
- B. Tape the thread to the bottom of the shoebox and wrap the thread tautly and evenly around into each corresponding notch until all are filled.
- C. Tape the finishing thread to the bottom of the shoebox, near the middle.

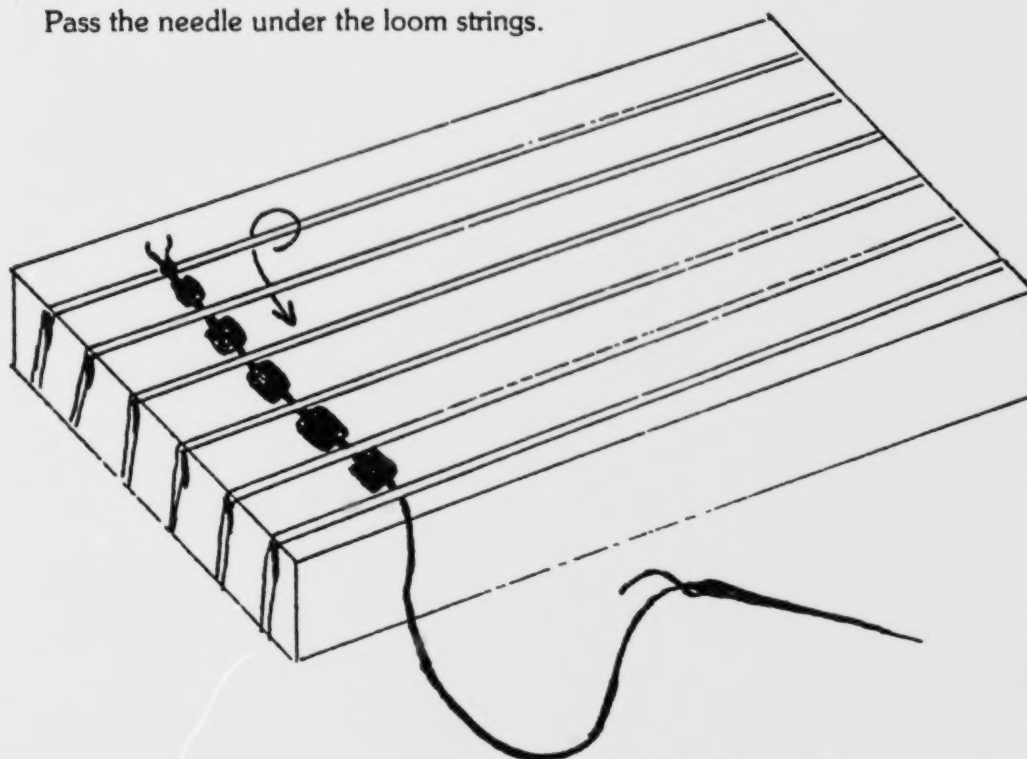


3. Loom Beading

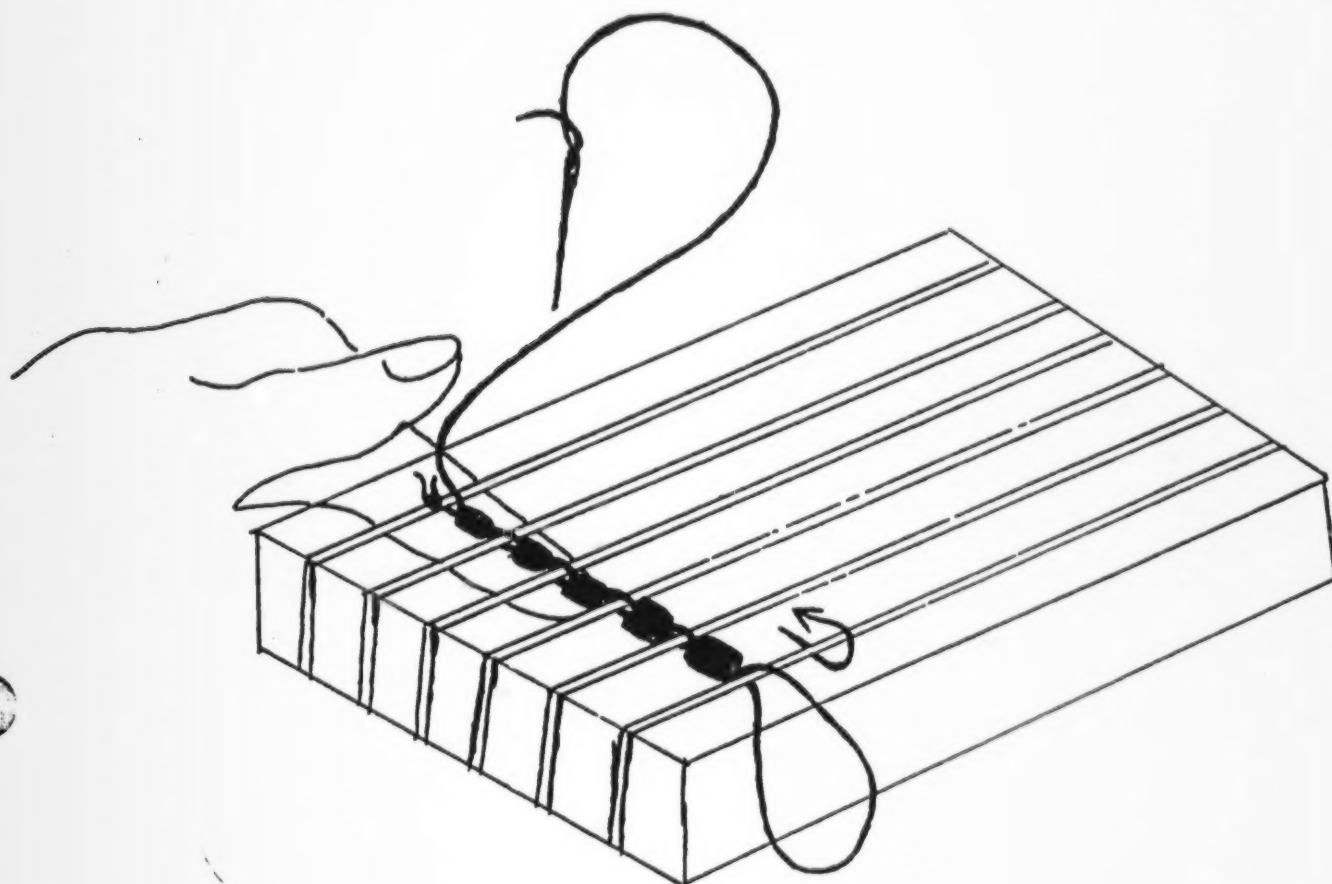
- A. Thread the needle with a 36" length of thread. Tie the end of the weaving thread to the first string on the loom.
- B. String five beads on the weaving thread and slide the beads down to the knot.



- C. Pass the needle under the loom strings.



- D. With the forefinger of the opposite hand, press the beads upward, pushing each bead into its proper place between the loom strings.
- E. With the hand holding the needle, slip the needle through the bead holes. This time the weaving thread will be on top of the loom strings.



- F. The subsequent rows are completed in the same manner as the first row.
- G. After the last (ninth) row has been completed, the extra weaving thread is woven back through the previous rows and the excess is cut off.

4. Completing the Bracelet

- A. Complete the bracelet by cutting the loom strings in the middle of the back of the shoebox.
- B. Braid the remaining loom strings, approximately three or four inches, on each end of the bracelet.
- C. Tie a knot at the end of each braid and cut off the excess thread.

MAKE A BEADWORK PATTERN

MAKE A BEADWORK PATTERN

DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS

Have the students:

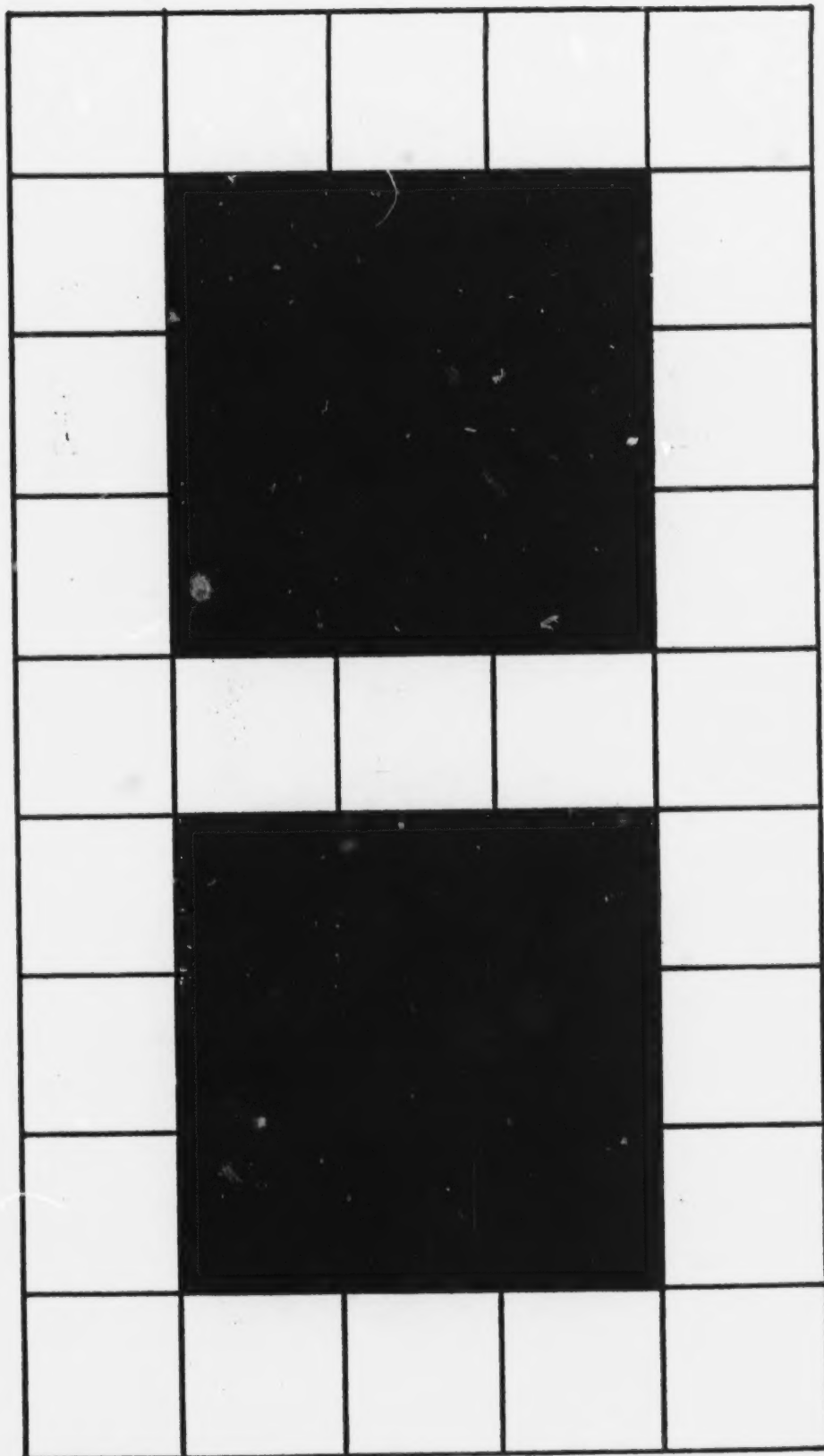
1. Work with two colors only; one for the design bead and one for the background bead.
2. Repeat a pattern from those provided on pages 20 through 25. These patterns can also be used for the bracelet.
3. Color the squares to form a pattern. For example, color the design squares red, then color the background squares blue.
4. Identify rows and strings by number starting at the bottom to reinforce the relationship of the graph and the loom.

Row 9						
Row 8						
Row 7						
Row 6						
Row 5						
Row 4						
Row 3						
Row 2						
Row 1						
	String 1	String 2	String 3	String 4	String 5	String 6

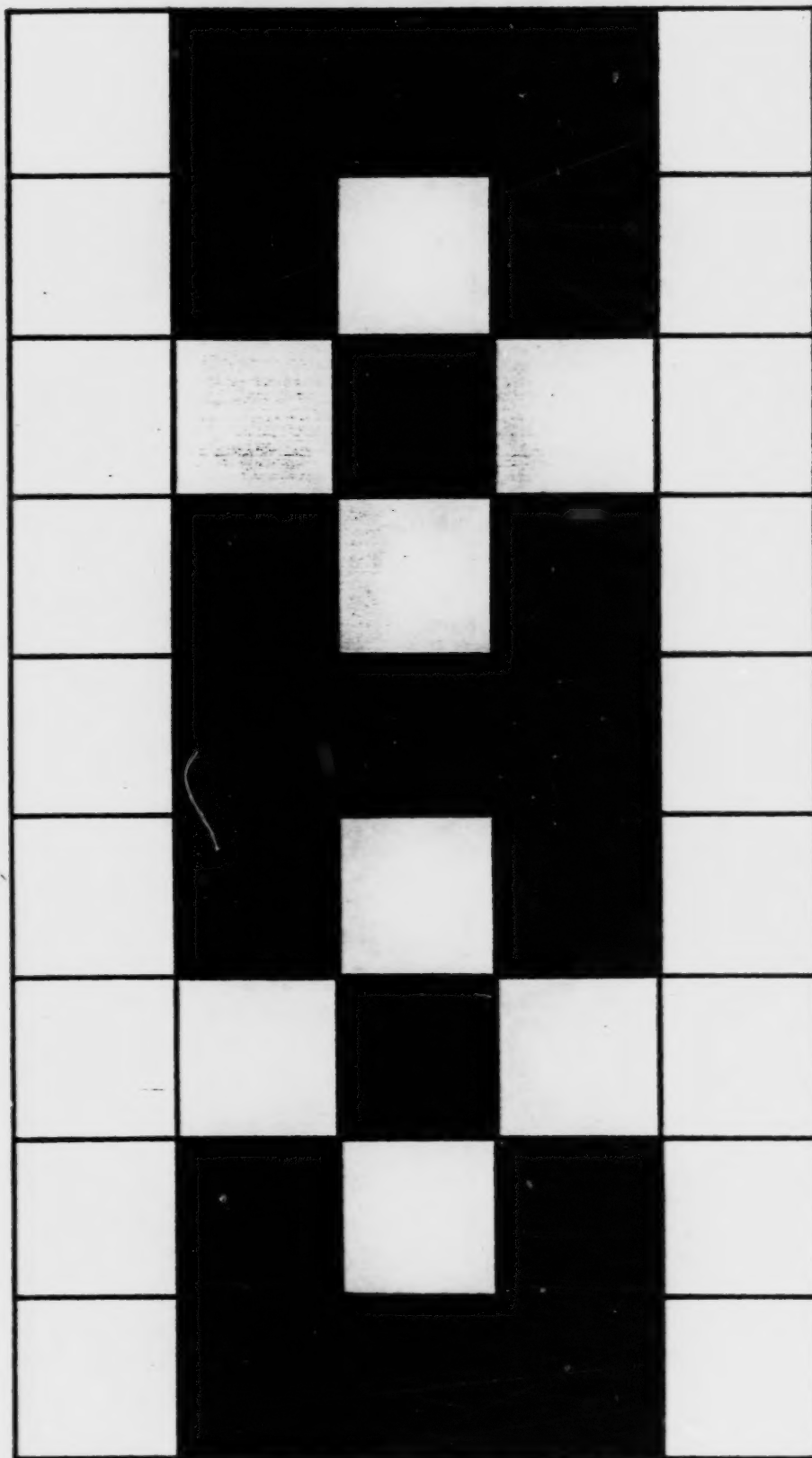
ACTIVITY VARIATIONS

Once the students are proficient at repeating designs, have them create their own. Have the students use smaller graph paper, more rows and strings, and more colors.

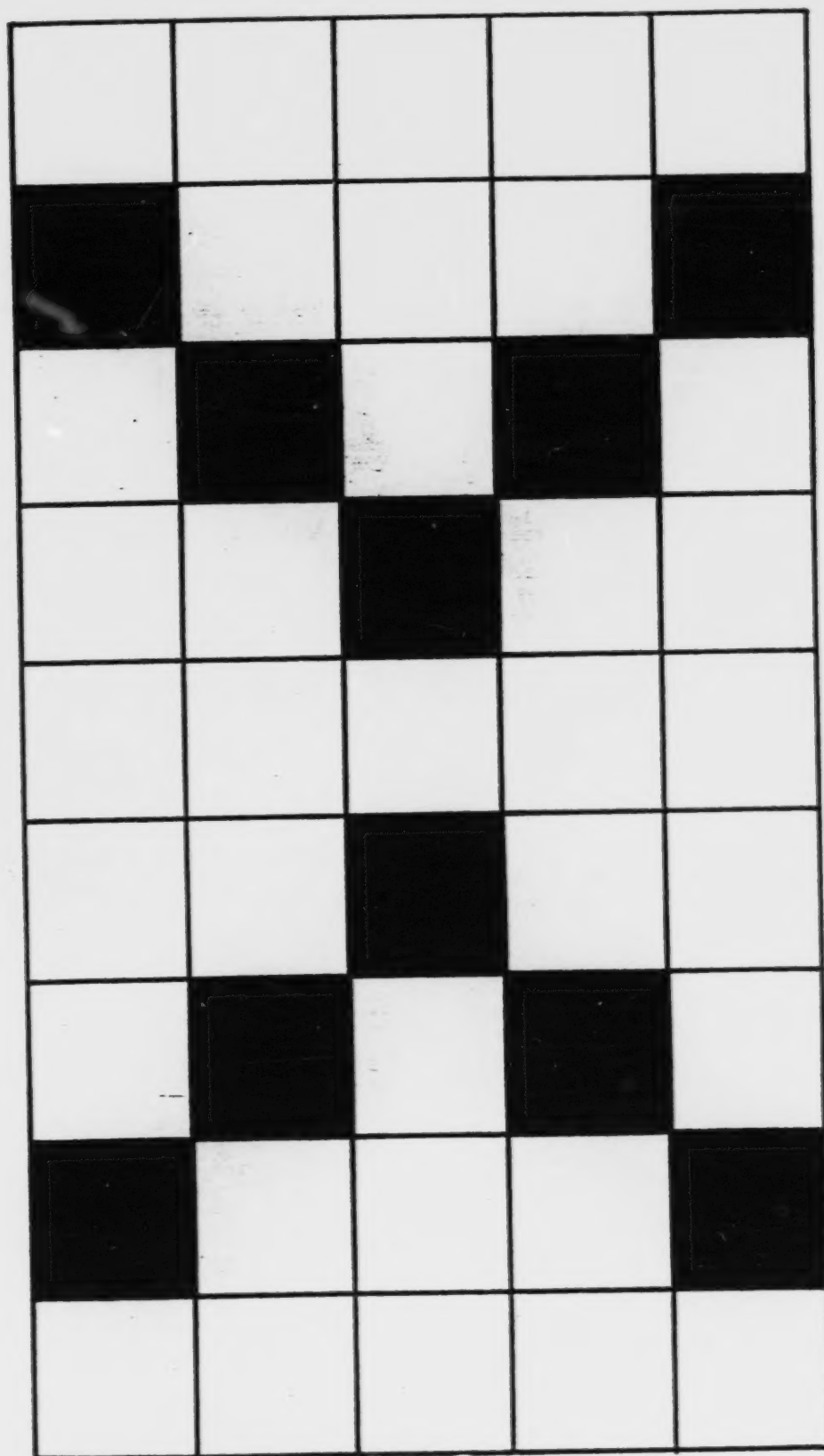
LOOMWORK: PATTERN A



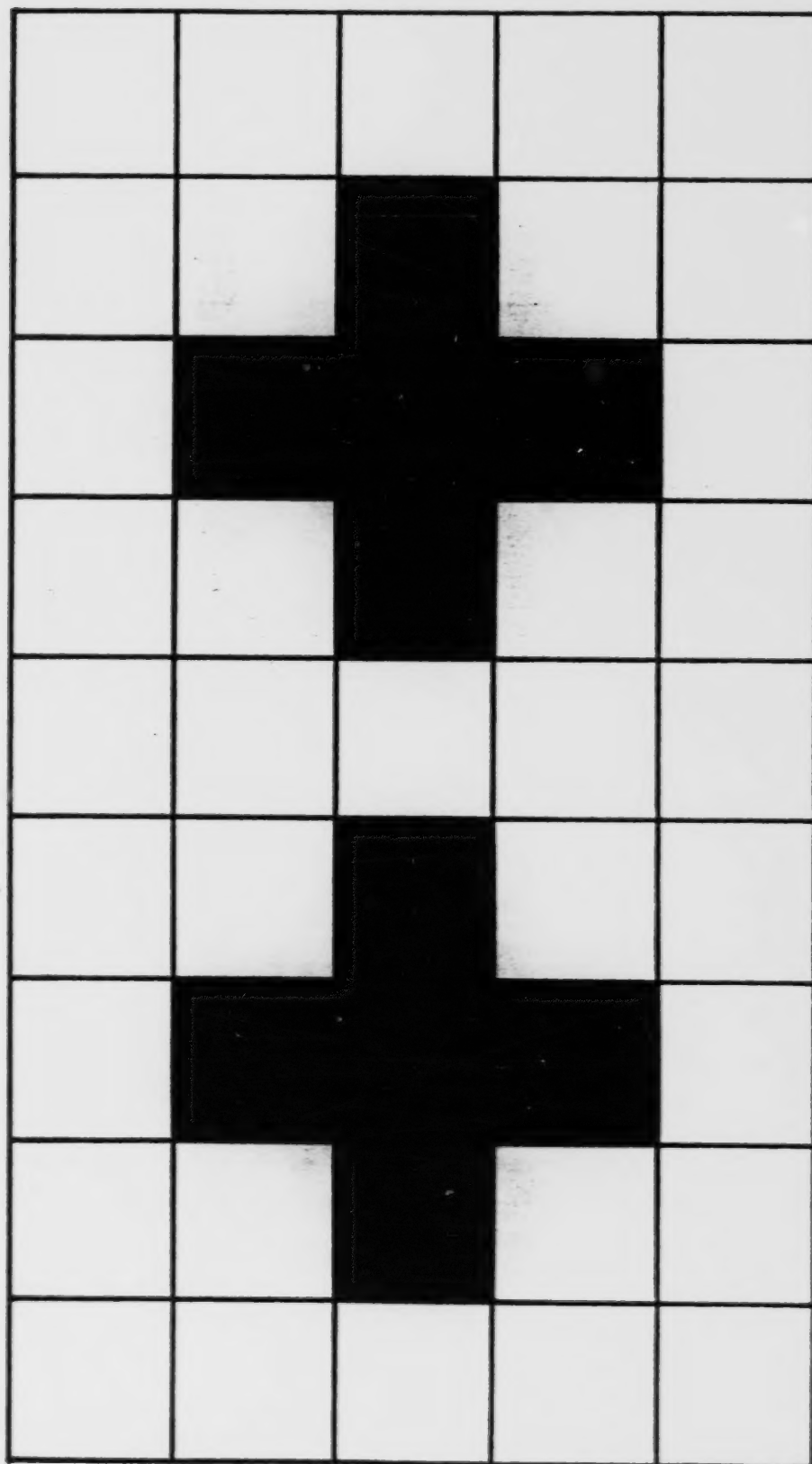
LOOMWORK: PATTERN B



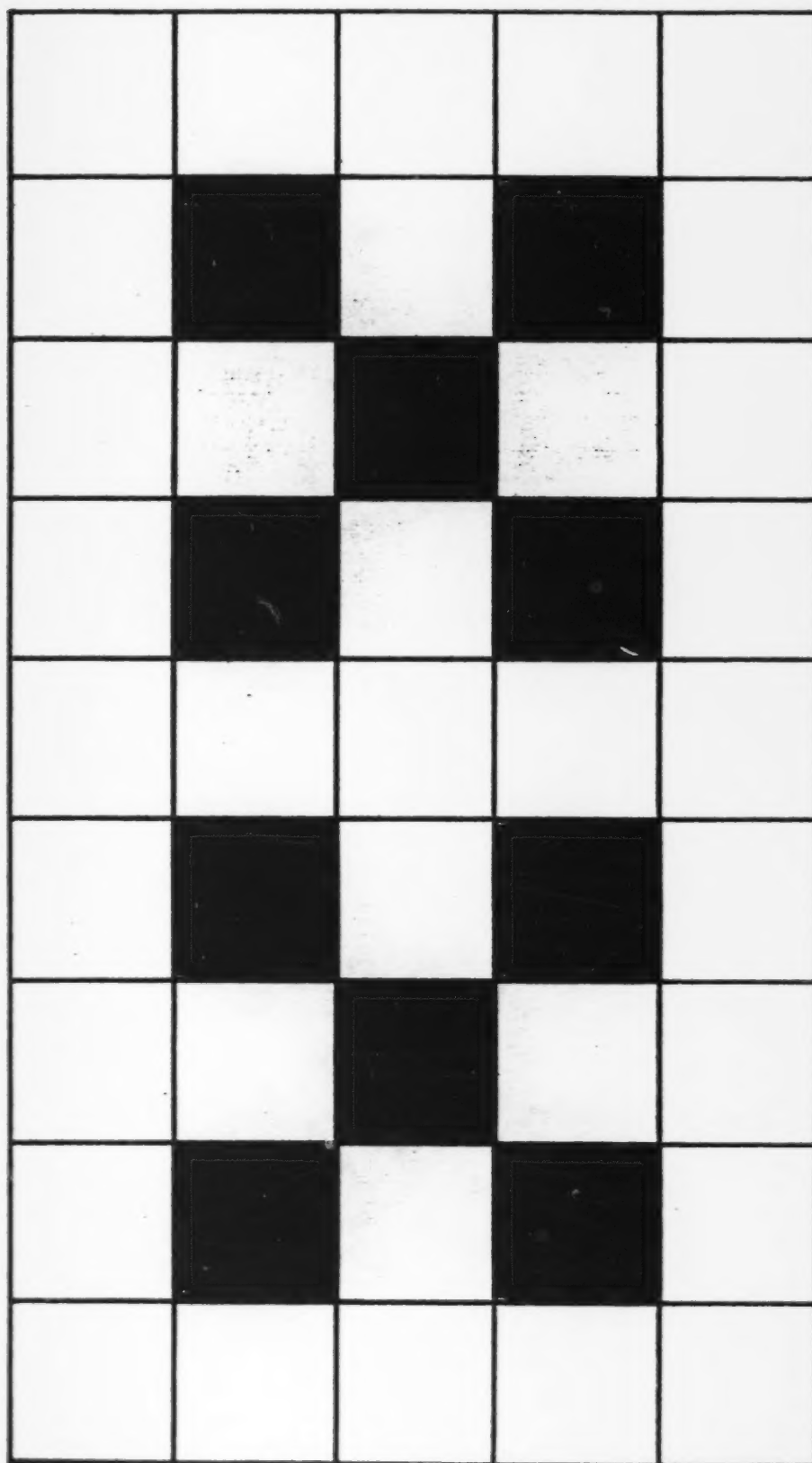
LOOMWORK: PATTERN C



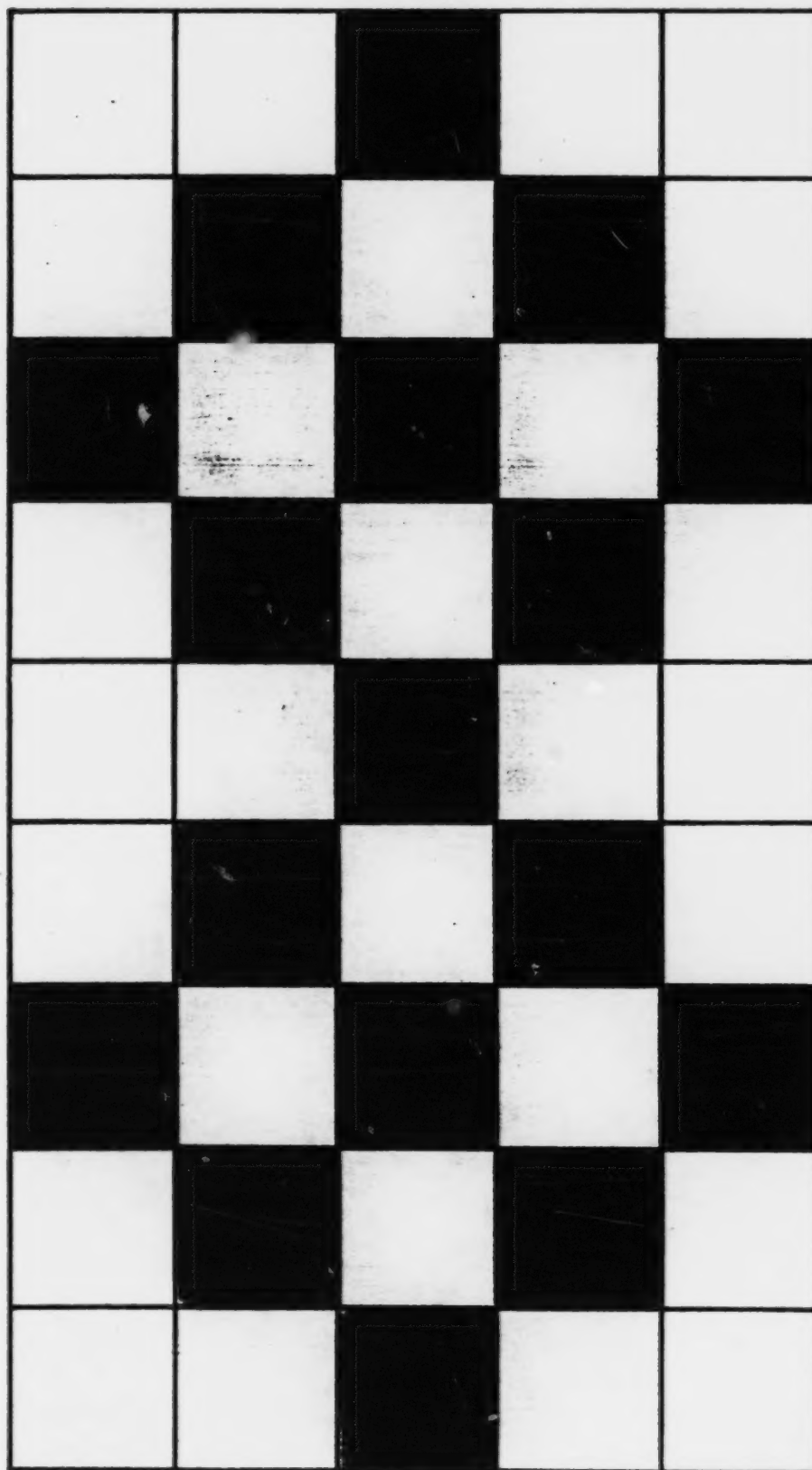
LOOMWORK: PATTERN D



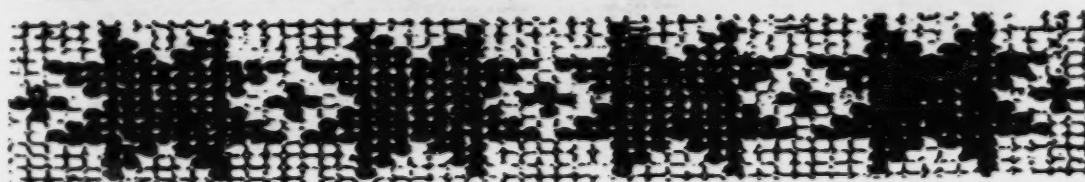
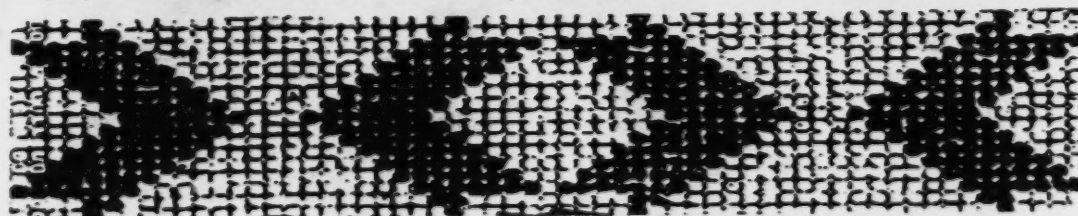
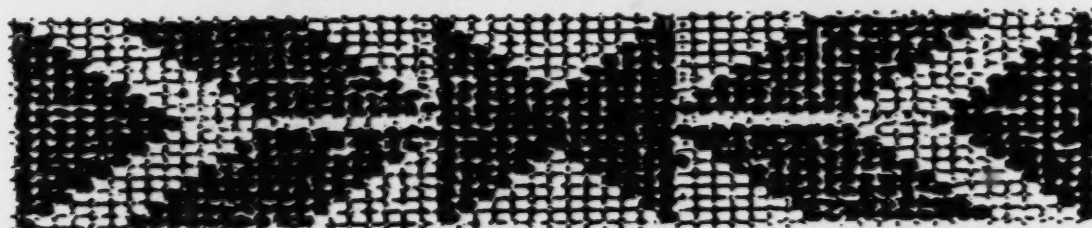
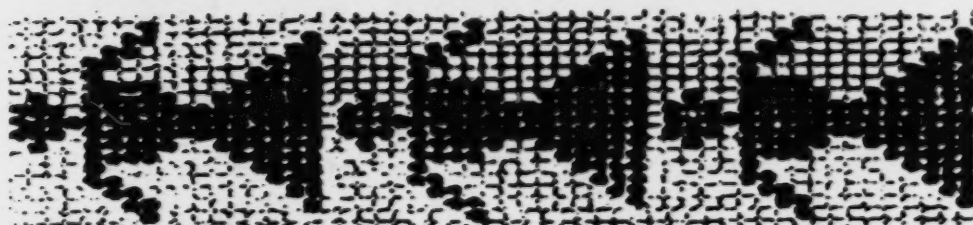
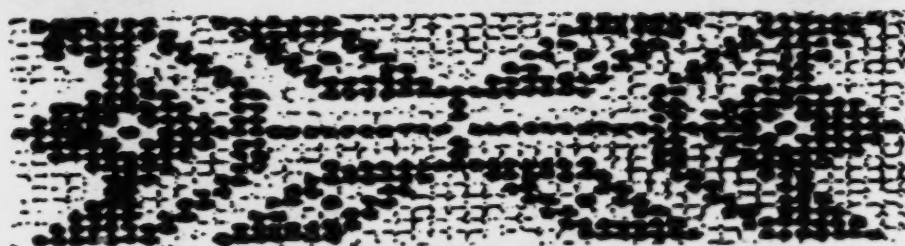
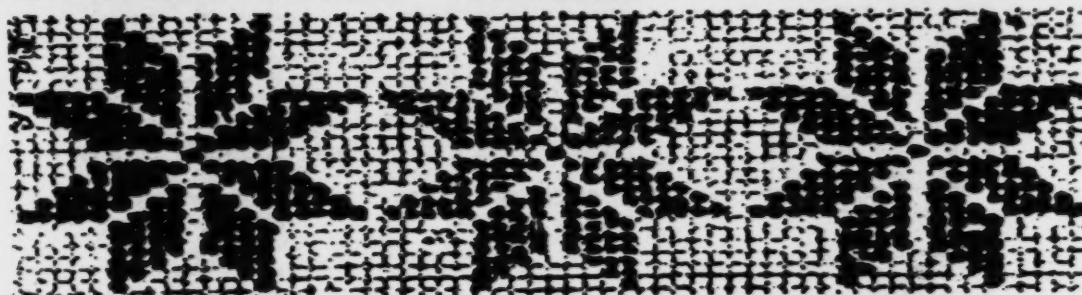
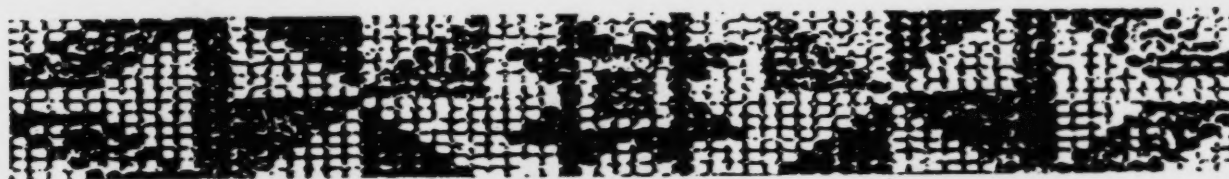
LOOMWORK: PATTERN E



LOOMWORK: PATTERN F



OTHER LOOMWORK PATTERNS



WEEGWAAHS:



**An Ojibwe Story
and Activities
Using Birch Bark**

The Minneapolis Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or disability.



Minneapolis Board of Education

Marilyn A. Borea, Chairperson

W. Harry Davis

Carol R. Lind

John M. Mason

Philip A. Olson

James W. Pommerenke

Jane A. Starr

Superintendent of Schools

Raymond G. Arveson

Special School District No. 1

MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

An Equal Opportunity School District

1979

The Indian Elementary Curriculum Project was made possible by funds from the State of Minnesota's American Indian Language and Culture Act.

First Printing, June, 1979

Indian Elementary Curriculum Project Staff:

FULL-TIME:

Paulette Fairbanks, Project Administrator
Christine Gale, Clerk-Typist
Kay Gamble, Teacher on Special Assignment
Nancy Hands, Teacher on Special Assignment

PART-TIME:

Diana Beaver, Student Intern
Mike Blake, Illustrator
Patrick Des Jarlait, Illustrator
Diane Leecy, Student Intern
Nina Ross, Student Intern
Carolynn Schommer, Dakota Language Instructor
Kathleen Westcott, Student Intern
Susan Weyaus, Ojibwe Language Instructor



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	1
Introduction	2
I. Objectives	4
II. Materials Needed	4
III. Directions and Procedures for Teachers	5
IV. Concepts and Vocabulary	5
V. Activity Variations	6
VI. Evaluation	6
VII. Resources	7
<i>Weegwahsimitig</i>	9
Discussion Sheet: Birch Trees	13
Activity One: Birch Bark Plaque	15
Activity Two: Basket	17
Activity Three: Transparency (Bitten Pattern)	19
Activity Four: Folded Cutout	21
Activity Five: Floral Design Cutout	23
Activity Six: Owl	25
Activity Seven: Canoe	27
Activity Eight: <i>Muhkuk</i>	29
Storyteller	33
Uses of Birch Bark	34

Foreword

This unit, *Weegwahs: * An Ojibwe Story and Activities Using Birch Bark*, is designed for use with elementary students. Its purpose is to provide information about the significance of birch bark to the Ojibwe and many other woodland tribes.

This significance is portrayed in *Weegwahsimitig, *** an Ojibwe legend about the birch tree, and in the activities. These activities show the qualities of birch bark and demonstrate some of its many uses.

Although it is preferred that birch bark be used in the unit activities, it is recognized that it is not always accessible. Therefore, tagboard and yarn are written in as substitutes. They are readily available and are easy for young students to use. Dark lines can be drawn on the tagboard to make it resemble birch bark. Tagboard is also useful for making practice patterns before birch bark is used.

* *Weegwahs* (wee gwahs) — an Ojibwe word meaning "birch bark."

** *Weegwahsimitig* (wee gwahs i mi tig) — an Ojibwe word meaning "birch tree."



Introduction

The white birch tree, which grows in many areas of the United States and Canada, was used extensively by the Ojibwe and other woodland tribes to create products vital to their existence. The bark of the white birch tree has many layers of various thicknesses. The thickness of the different layers determines how the bark will be used. The bark itself is wind and waterproof as well as tough and durable. The winter bark, peeled in the springtime, is thicker and more difficult to remove than the summer bark. The summer bark is very durable, however. Bark removed from the largest trees shows from six to nine layers and is strong enough to be made into canoes. At the other extreme, some of the bark is as thin as tissue paper, and tough enough to use for wrapping packages. Between these two extremes are different grades of thickness in the bark.

When large thick sheets of bark were needed for canoes, the trees were felled. The bark was then cut the desired length and removed from the tree. For small pieces of birch bark, only the outer bark was removed from the tree. Thin pieces could be removed if care was taken in cutting it.

Indian people were able to remove large quantities of bark without destroying the birch trees because they knew the best time for stripping the trees without harming them. The time varied in different locales, but generally the bark was gathered "... from the time the leaves of the birch tree were completely unfolded until the end of July, before it was set and while it could be easily peeled from the tree."¹

Birch bark containers were usually sewn with fibers obtained from the inner bark of basswood, cedar and elm trees or with spruce root. Holes or cracks in the bark were often mended with balsam gum or with pitch. Sometimes baskets were converted into pails by caulking the seams with pitch.

The following are some of the uses made of birch bark:

- A. Bird houses
- B. Boxes which were frequently decorated with porcupine quills and sweet grass
- C. Canoes
- D. Charts
- E. Cooking pots
- F. Dishes
- G. Envelopes and writing paper
- H. Hats
- I. Kindling
- J. Mats
- K. Motifs for quill and beadwork patterns which were cut out and kept for future use
- L. Picture frames

¹Carrie A. Lyford, *Ojibwe Crafts* (Washington, D.C.: Branch of Education, Bureau of Indian Affairs), p. 47.

- M. "Quick pack" similar to a parfleche of the plains tribes for transporting possessions. It consisted of a large sheet of birch bark which was folded, tied with strips of cedar bark, and a handle made from braided cedar bark.
- N. Scrolls drawn with pictographs traced with sharply pointed instruments, usually of bone or stone
- O. Sewing baskets
- P. Splints for fractured limbs
- Q. Storage containers of various sizes, both watertight and non-watertight. Watertight containers were used for cooking before metal pots and pans became available. According to Carrie Lyford, this was done by dropping a series of hot stones into the container after it had been filled with water. As the first stones cooled, hot ones were added. The watertight container could also be filled with liquid and set over heat for cooking.
- R. Torches for nighttime, hunting, fishing and other tasks
- S. Transparencies, made by folding thin sheets of birch bark and biting them in such a way that they showed symmetrical patterns when unfolded.
- T. Trumpets for moose calling
- U. Vases
- V. Waste baskets
- W. Wrapping paper
- X. Wrappings for bodies of the dead and grave coverings
- Y. Wigiwam coverings made from overlapping sheets of bark which were sewn together from basswood fiber. Strips of cedar were attached to the completed mats to keep them from tearing. The mats were arranged like shingles to shed water.

Although these uses of birch bark served practical purposes, much of the work demonstrated artistry and close attention to detail in design and decorative touches.

Changes such as reduced tribal land areas, the introduction of different materials through trading and other contacts, and industrialization have reduced the use of birch bark. However, there are many Indian craftspeople today who enjoy making birch bark products.

I. OBJECTIVES

- A. Given the introduction:
1. The students will identify the following characteristics of birch bark:
 - a) It comes from the white birch tree which grows in many areas of the United States and Canada.
 - b) It is made of layers of different thicknesses.
 - c) It is wind and waterproof as well as tough and durable.
 - d) It was used extensively by the Ojibwe and other woodland tribes.
 2. The student will correctly identify five uses of birch bark.
 3. The students will correctly identify the best time for stripping the trees without harming them.
 4. The students will correctly state that texture (thickness or thinness) determines how the bark is used.
 5. The students will give one example of how thick bark can be used.
 6. The students will give one example of how thin inner bark can be used.
 7. The students will correctly state that there are many Indian craftspeople who make birch bark products today.
- B. By working with birch bark, the students will describe such characteristics as its color, texture and strength.

II. MATERIALS NEEDED

- A. *Weegwahsimitig*
- B. Discussion Sheet: Birch Trees
- C. Activity Sheets One through Eight

III. DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS

- A. Discuss the background information with the students emphasizing the following points: characteristics of the white birch tree, uses of birch bark, the best time and method for obtaining bark, identification of some of the groups that utilized birch bark, and present usage of bark.
- B. Try to obtain birch bark for the activities. If tagboard is used as a substitute material, a piece of actual birch bark should be made available to the students to enable them to feel the texture and see the different layers. Birch trees should not be disfigured to obtain the bark. Careful removal of layers of the white bark will not kill the tree if the dark coarse inner bark is not disturbed. Find a legitimate source of the bark, such as from places where permission has been granted; firewood; or from felled trees.
- C. Duplicate and distribute *Weegwahsimitig* to the students. Read the story. Utilize the discussion questions provided.
- D. Duplicate and distribute Discussion Sheet: Birch Trees, to the students. Utilize the questions on the back of the sheet to discuss the birch tree and its characteristics.
- E. Prepare materials in advance for the activities chosen.

IV. CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY

- A. Birch bark — the outer covering of white birch trees, used by many woodland Indian tribes to make essential items.
- B. Caulk — to fill or close a seam, joint, etc., to make watertight, airtight, etc.
- C. *Muhkuk* (muh kuk) — an Ojibwe word meaning "container."
- D. Pitch — the sap or crude turpentine which exudes from the bark of pines.
- E. Plaque — a thin, flat plate intended for ornament, as on a wall.
- F. *Weegwahs* (wee gwahs) — an Ojibwe word meaning "birch bark."
- G. *Weegwahsimitig* (wee gwahs i mi tig) — an Ojibwe word meaning "birch tree."
- H. White birch tree — a variety of birch trees also commonly called paper or canoe birch. It is called this because of its white outer covering.

V. ACTIVITY VARIATIONS

- A. To use this unit for language arts, utilize stories, poems and other readings related to birch trees and birch bark. For example, read the legend *Nanabush Loses His Eyeballs* by Daphne "Odjig" Beavon.² This legend explains how the birch tree obtained its markings. Another example is the poem *Birches* by Robert Frost.
- B. To incorporate this unit into science studies, the following are activity suggestions:
 - 1. Make mobiles using birch bark cutouts.
 - 2. Study the growth patterns of birch trees (location, climate, height, etc.).
 - 3. Make a small scale canoe, following the slide presentation *How to Make a Chippewa (Ojibwe) Birch Bark Canoe*.³ Find out if it is watertight, what causes it to float, and so forth.
 - 4. Have the students research, make, then experiment cooking in watertight birch bark containers.

VI. EVALUATION

- A. Did the students correctly identify characteristics of birch bark?
- B. Did the students identify five uses of birch bark?
- C. Did the students identify the best time for stripping the trees without harming them?
- D. Did the students state that texture determines how bark is used?
- E. Did the students give one example of how thick bark can be used?
- F. Did the students give one example of how thin inner bark can be used?
- G. Did the students state that there are many Indian craftspeople who make birch bark products today?

²Daphne "Odjig" Beavon, *Nanabush Loses His Eyeballs* (Lexington, Mass.: Ginn & Co., 1971).

³*How to Make a Chippewa (Ojibwe) Birch Bark Canoe* (St. Paul, Minnesota: Minnesota Historical Society).

VII. RESOURCES

- American Indian Curricula Development Program. *Circle of Life*. Bismarck, North Dakota: United Tribes of North Dakota Development Corporation, U.T.E.T.C., 1975.
- Beavon, Daphne "Odjig." *Nanabush Loses His Eyeballs*. Lexington, Massachusetts: Ginn & Co., 1971.
- Brill, Charles. *Indian and Free*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1971.
- Brockman, C. Frank. *Trees of North America*. Racine, Wisconsin: Western Publishing Co., Inc., 1968.
- Densmore, Frances. *Chippewa Customs*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Ross and Haines, Inc., reprint 1970.
- Densmore, Frances. *Chippewa Music*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Ross and Haines, Inc., reprint 1973.
- Densmore, Frances. *How Indians Use Wild Plants for Food, Medicine, and Crafts*. New York, New York: Dover Publications (Originally published in 1928 under the title *Uses of Plants by the Chippewa Indians*), 1974.
- Des Jarlait, Patrick. *Patrick Des Jarlait, The Story of An American Indian Artist, as told to Neva Williams*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Lerner Publications Co., 1975.
- Dewdney, Selwyn. *The Sacred Scrolls of the Southern Ojibway*. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1975.
- Douglas, F.H. *Birchbark and the Indian*. Leaflet 102. Denver, Colorado: Denver Art Museum, 1941.
- Gallob, Edward. *City Leaves City Trees*. New York, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972.
- Gopher Historian*. Winter 1971-72. St. Paul, Minnesota: Minnesota Historical Society.
- How to Make a Chippewa (Ojibwe) Birch Bark Canoe* (17 slides), Minnesota Historical Society, 690 Cedar Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101.
- Johnston, Basil. *Moosemeat and Wild Rice*. Toronto, Ontario. Jefferson Press Limited, 1978.
- Johnston, Basil. *Ojibwe Heritage*. New York, New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.
- Kostich, Dragos D. *George Morrison: The Story of An American Indian*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Dillon Press, 1976.

- Lyford, Carrie A. *Ojibwe Crafts*. Washington, D.C.: Branch of Education, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1943.
- Mahnomen — Harvest of the North* (motion picture), George W. Colburn Laboratory, Inc., 164 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606, 1959. 17 minutes, color.
- Martinson, David. *Anishinabe Reading Series*. Duluth, Minnesota: Duluth Indian Education Advisory Committee, Independent School District #709, 1975.
- Ojibwe Curriculum Committee, American Indian Studies Department, University of Minnesota, and the Educational Services Division, Minnesota Historical Society. *Ojibwe Resource Unit*. St. Paul, Minnesota: Ojibwe Curriculum Committee, 1973.
- The Owl and the Lemming* (motion picture), ACI Films, Inc., P.O. Box 1898, 12 Jules Lane, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08902, 1974. 7 minutes, color.
- The Owl and the Raven* (motion picture), ACI Films, Inc., P.O. Box 1898, 12 Jules Lane, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 08902, 1974. 8 minutes, color.
- Roufs, Timothy G. *The Anishinabe of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe*. Phoenix, Arizona: Indian Tribal Series, The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1975.
- Schneider, Richard C. *Crafts of the North American Indians*. New York, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1972.
- Sisibakwat — The Ojibwe Maple Harvest* (motion picture), George W. Colburn Laboratory, Inc., 164 N. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606, 1961. 18 minutes, color.
- Warren, William. *History of the Ojibway Nation*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Ross and Haines, Inc., reprint 1957.
- Wiigwaasijiimaan — The Birch Bark Canoe* (video tape or motion picture), Saginaw Chippewa Tribe, 7070 East Broadway, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 38858, 1979. 25 minutes.
- Zim, Herbert S., Ph.D. and Martin, Alexander C., Ph.D. *Trees: A Guide to Familiar American Trees*. New York, New York: Golden Press, Inc., 1956.

WEEGWAHSIMITIG*

Retold by Ignatia Broker

Many years ago Ojibwe people were living in the forests with the animals, whom they called their brothers and sisters. Children would often say, "How pretty *Weegwahsimitig* is." They did not know what I had to offer.

I am *Weegwahsimitig*. People have been my friends for thousands of years. For a long time, people only looked at me but never touched me. This made me sad. I had a gift to share with them. I will tell you a story about how I shared my gift.

It was a little girl who first used my gift. She walked among the trees, marking them with charcoal. She had soft black eyes. Her long hair was wrapped round and round with strips of inner bark from the basswood tree. After making marks on my white bark, she said, "I will sleep and dream here, next to you."



**Weegwahsimitig* (wee gwahs i mi tig) — an Ojibwe word meaning "birch tree."

While she slept, thunder and lightning roared and sparked. Rain came pouring down. I knew that my branches and leaves could not stop the rain from reaching her. I loosened a sheet of my bark. It dropped over her. It kept her warm and dry.

After the sun came out, I saw another person approaching. As she came near, I saw that she was very old. Her hair was wrapped the same as the little girl's. She said, "I am looking for my granddaughter. She is a tiny girl."

I waved one of my branches at her to show that I understood. I murmured and sent leaves down to tickle the little girl. She awoke and came out from under the bark.



The grandmother bent down and picked up the bark. Silently she looked at me and so I loosened another sheet and dropped it at her feet. She picked up the bark and held it out to the east, the west, the south, and the north.

I heard the thanks she gave. She understood my gift.



My bark became the sides and tops of Ojibwe lodges. I kept the people warm and dry just as I had kept the little girl dry. My bark was also used to make canoes, baskets, containers and pots. Little children played with toys made of birch bark. At night, the Ojibwe rolled it into a torch to light the way.

I was glad that the Ojibwe knew what I had to offer. They used my gift in many different ways.

Illustrated by Patrick DesJarlait

Directions and Procedures for Teachers

1. Duplicate and distribute *Weegwahsimitig* to each student.
2. Read the story, *Weegwahsimitig*.
3. Utilize the following discussion questions:
 - a) *Weegwahsimitig* was sad because it had a gift to share and no one knew about it. Describe a time when you wanted to share something and could not.
 - b) The little girl trusted the tree enough to be able to lay down and sleep next to it. Who do you trust and why?
 - c) The birch tree protected the little girl from thunder and lightning. Who protects you from harm? What kind of harm does this person protect you from?
 - d) Why did the grandmother give thanks?
 - e) Name some things that you saw made or have made from birch bark.

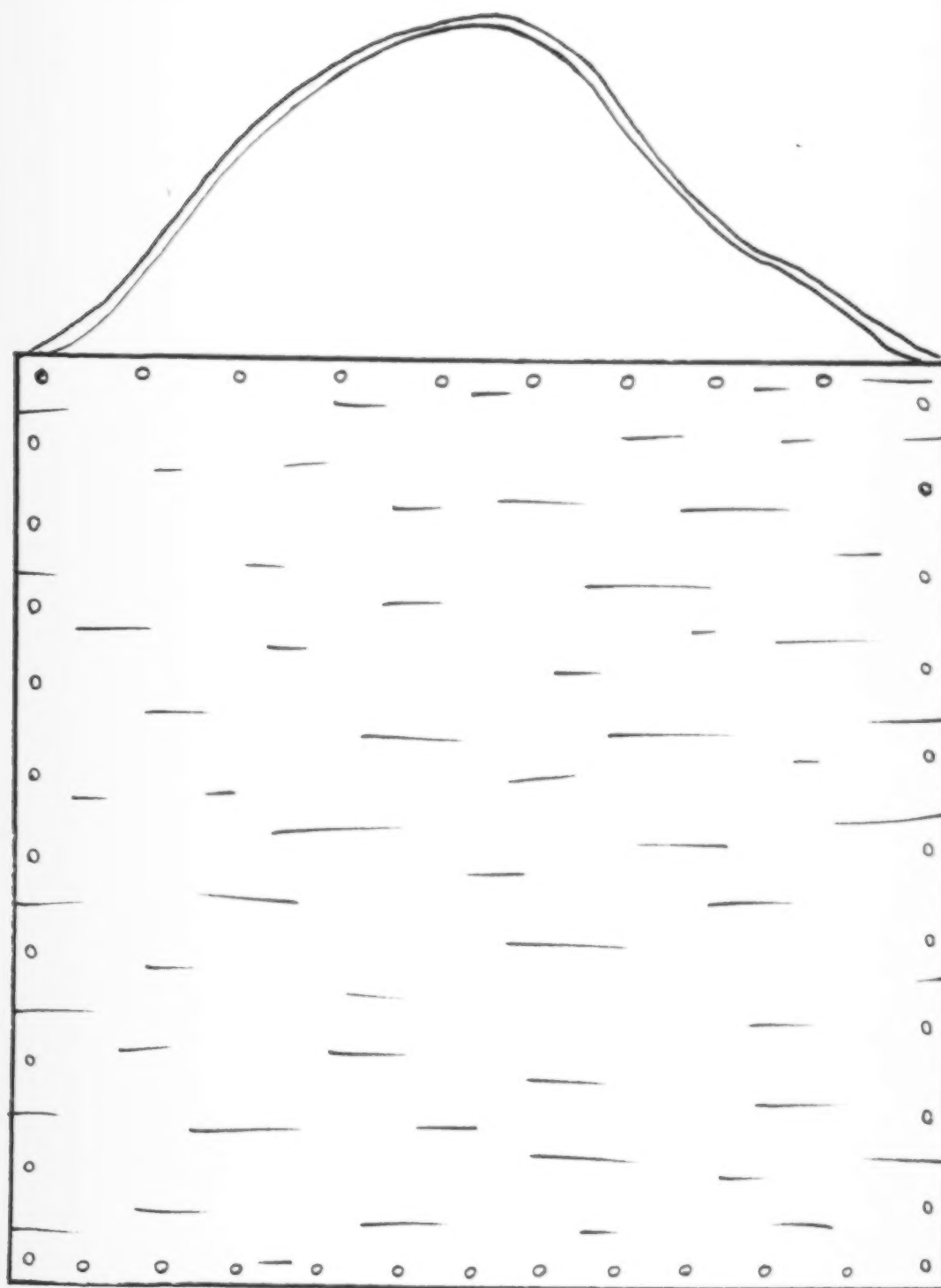


Discussion Sheet: Birch Trees

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Have the students describe what they see in the illustration.
2. Describe some of the characteristics of birch trees.
3. If you were going to take bark from birch trees, how would you do it?
4. If you had some birch bark, what would you make with it?

Activity One: Birch Bark Plaque



Activity One: Birch Bark Plaque

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. Birch bark or tagboard for each student.
2. Leather or paper punch to punch holes.
3. Yarn — 48" piece and 18" piece for each student.
4. For tagboard, students can use dark markings to resemble birch bark.

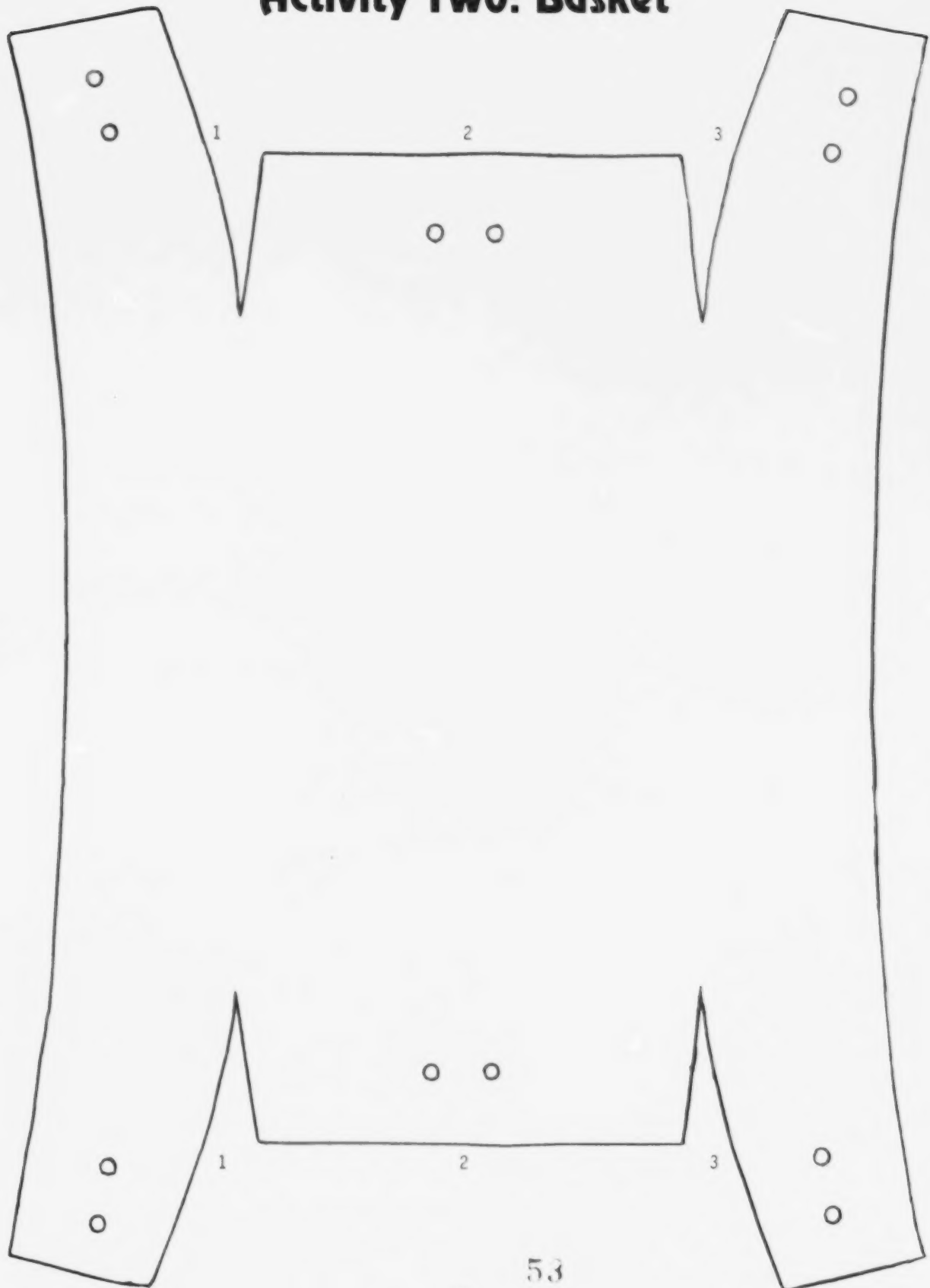
DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS

1. Duplicate the pattern onto tagboard for each student.
2. If birch bark is used, trace the pattern onto a thin sheet of bark.
3. Have the students cut out the pattern and punch holes where indicated.
4. Tie one end of the 48" piece of yarn into a knot at the back of the plaque, at any punched hole and lace in an overcast stitch.
5. With the 18" piece of yarn, make a loop for hanging up the plaque by tying the yarn into the end holes at the top of the plaque.
6. Decorate the plaque with cutouts or drawings.

ACTIVITY VARIATIONS

Use other patterns created by students.

Activity Two: Basket



Activity Two: Basket

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. Birch bark or tagboard for each student.
2. Leather or paper punch to punch holes.
3. Two 12" pieces of yarn for each student.
4. For tagboard, students can use dark markings to resemble birch bark.

DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS

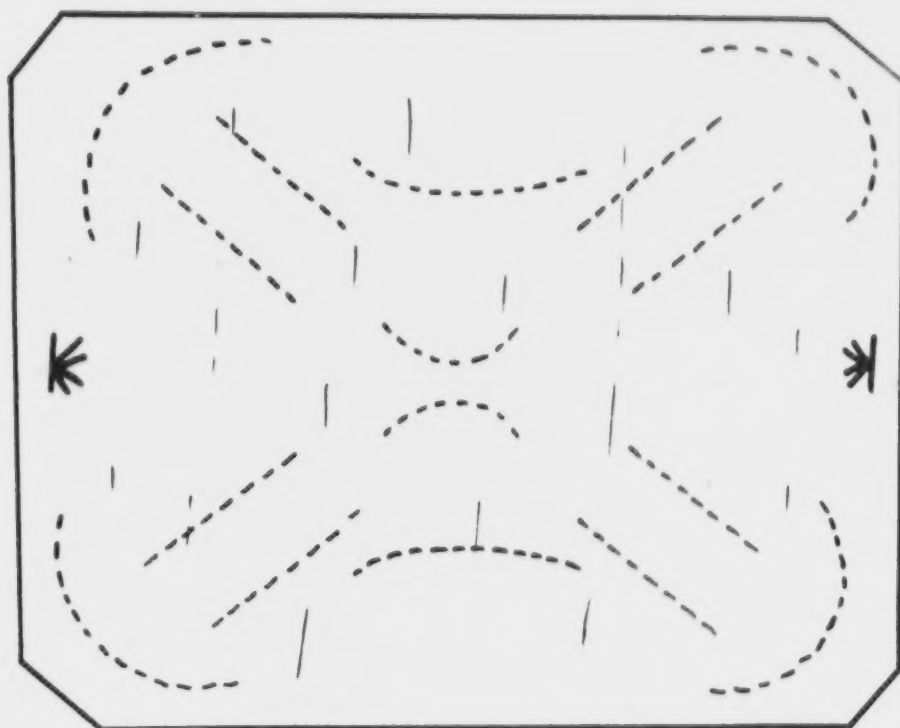
1. Duplicate the pattern onto tagboard for each student.
2. If birch bark is used, trace the pattern onto a thin sheet of bark.
3. Have the students cut out the pattern and punch holes where indicated.
4. Fold up flap number two. Bring flaps one and three around the outside of flap number two and match the holes.
5. Lace the yarn through the matched flap holes starting on the inside of the basket. Lace the yarn through the other set of flap holes back to the inside of the basket. Tie a knot.
6. Repeat steps four and five for the opposite end of the basket.
7. Have the students use their baskets for pencil boxes, gifts, or to hold odds and ends.

ACTIVITY VARIATION:

Reduce or enlarge the pattern for other size baskets.

Activity Three: Transparency

(BITTEN PATTERN)



Activity Three: Transparency

(BITTEN PATTERN)

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Very thin pieces of birch bark for each student.

DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS:

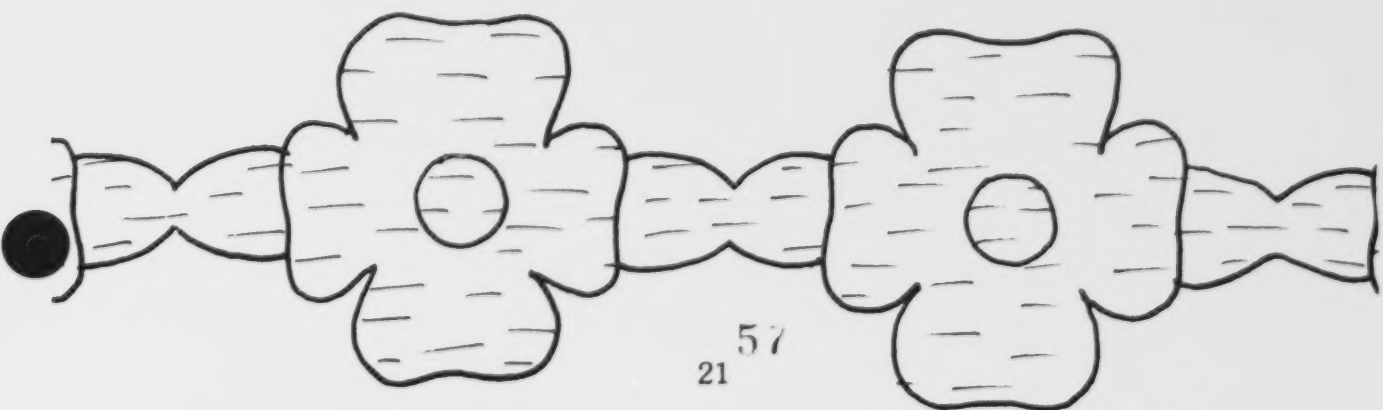
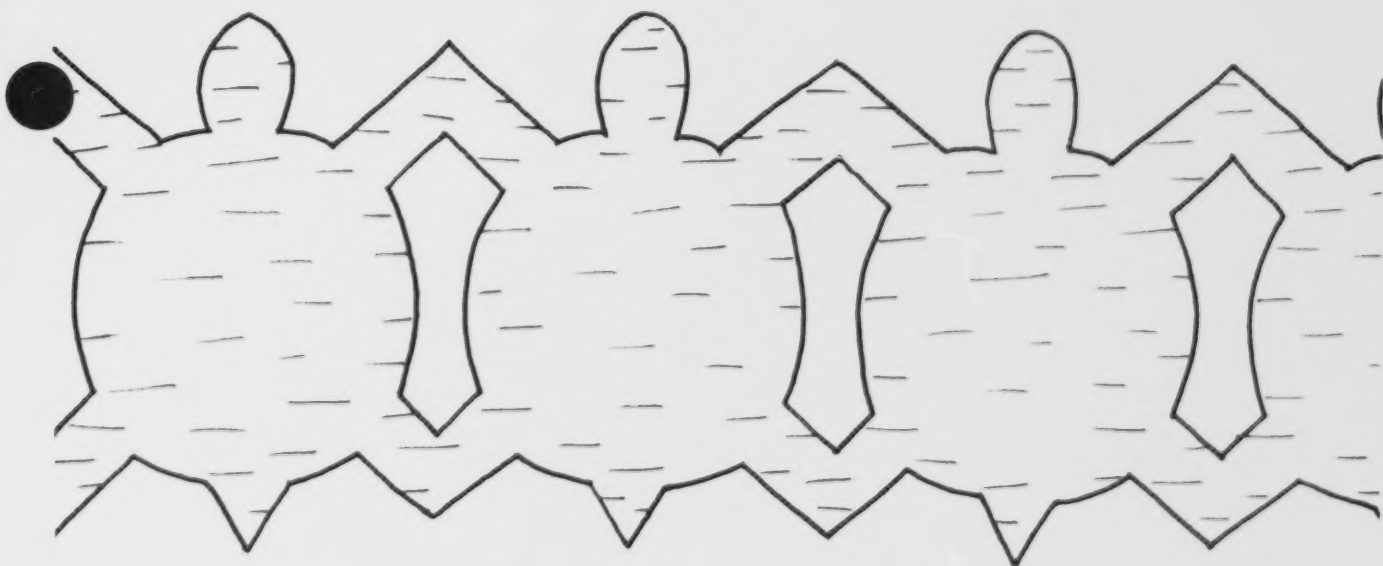
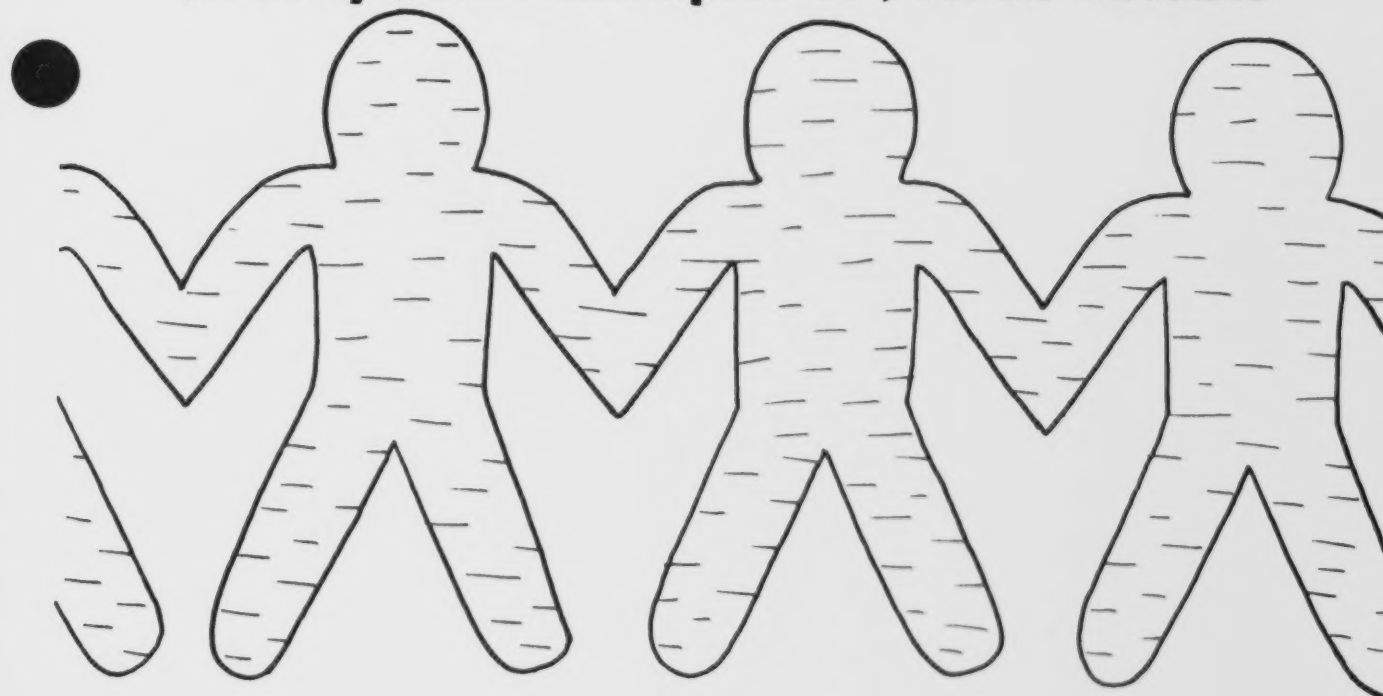
1. Explain to the students that bitten patterns on birch bark were used by the Ojibwe and other tribes before modern cutting implements were available.⁴ They were often used as guides for making beadwork designs and scraped patterns on birch bark products. The transparencies themselves were also appreciated for their inherently pleasing appearance.
2. Have the students fold a thin piece of bark in half and then in fourths, and make a series of dots on the bark with the eye teeth. The design must be done mainly by instinct since the bark must be moved along without visual guidance or using a pattern.
3. The folding of the bark duplicates the design in a symmetrical pattern (as in paper snowflakes).

ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

Have the students cut out their designs in the birch bark the same way paper snowflakes are made.

⁴Lyford, *Ojibwe Crafts*, p. 149.

Activity Four: Examples of Folded Cutouts



Activity Four: Folded Cutout

MATERIALS NEEDED:

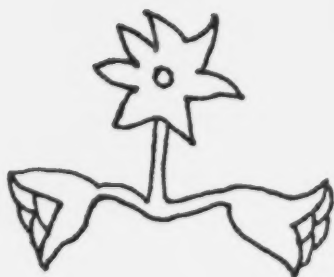
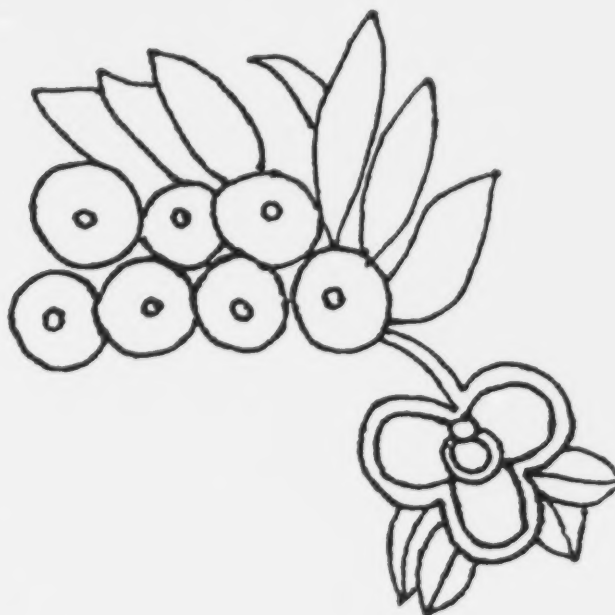
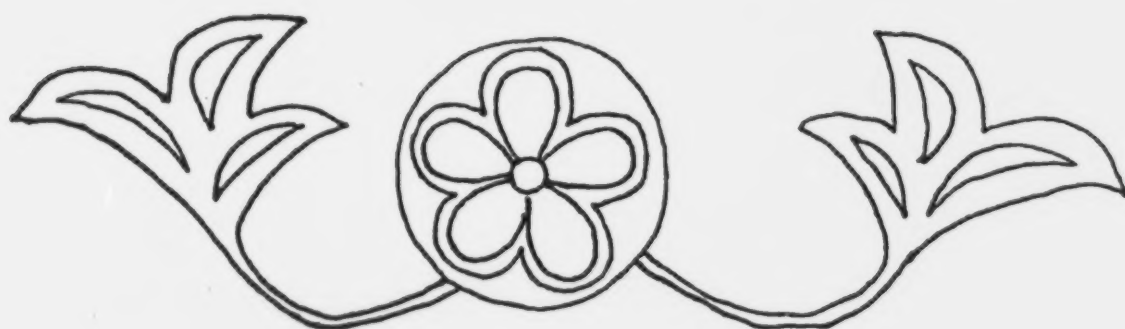
1. Paper or thin pieces of birch bark for each student.
2. Examples of folded cutouts.

DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS:

1. Fold paper or thin sheet of birch bark according to the number of objects desired (half, fourths, eighths, and so forth).
2. Draw on the fold a pattern similar to that shown below. Cut only on the solid lines.



Activity Five: Examples of Floral Designs



Activity Five: Floral Design Cutouts

MATERIALS NEEDED:

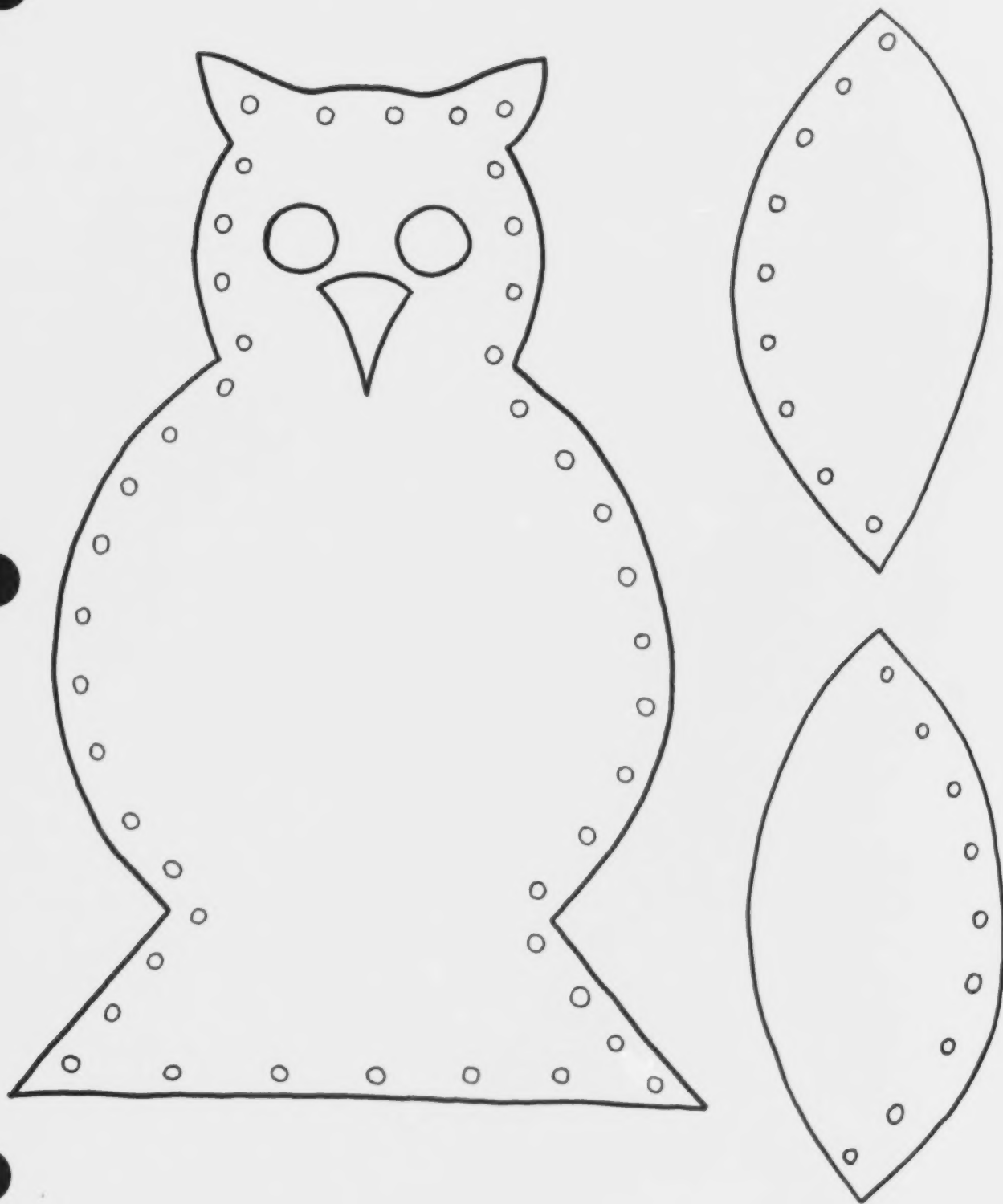
1. Tagboard or thin pieces of birch bark for each student.
2. Examples of floral designs.
3. Scissors.

DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS:

1. Have the students create designs from tagboard or thin pieces of birch bark.
2. Cut out the designs.
3. Floral cutouts were often applied to baskets and other birch bark objects. The cutouts can be used to decorate birch bark articles or used for decorative purposes in the classroom (bulletin boards, mobiles, art projects and so forth).



Activity Six: Owl



Activity Six: Owl

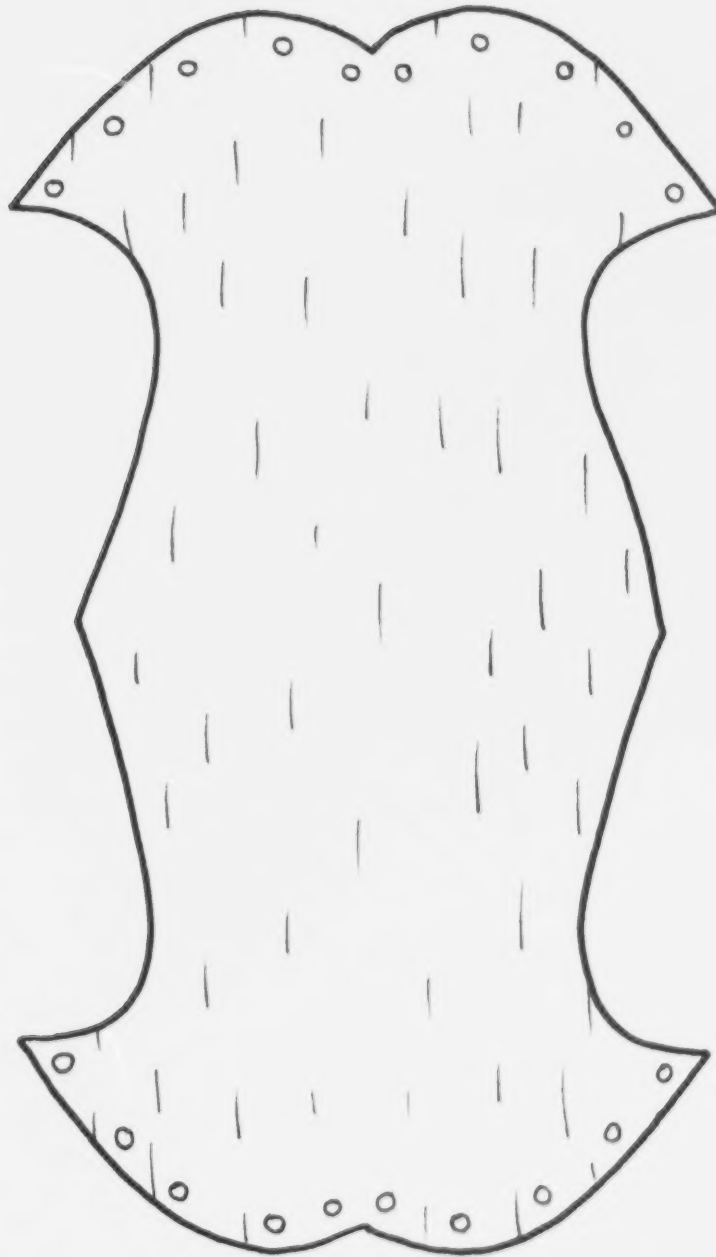
MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. Birch bark or tagboard for each student.
2. Leather or paper punch.
3. Yarn, 36" for each student, and paste.
4. For tagboard, students can use dark markings to resemble birch bark.

DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS:

1. Duplicate the pattern onto tagboard for each student.
2. If birch bark is used, trace the pattern onto bark, cut out, and punch holes where indicated.
3. Match the punched holes in the wings (pattern B) with those on the owl (pattern A) and lace in an overcast stitch.
4. Cut out the eyes and beak and paste on the owl.

Activity Sheet Seven: Canoe



Activity Seven: Canoe

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. Birch bark or tagboard for each student.
2. Yarn, 12" for each student.
3. Leather or paper punch (a blunt needle may work better for punching holes in heavier pieces of birch bark).

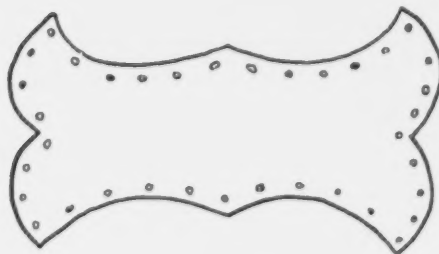
DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS:

1. Duplicate the pattern onto tagboard for each student.
2. If birch bark is used, trace the pattern onto bark, cut out, making certain that the grain of the bark runs along the width of the canoe.
3. Punch holes where indicated.
4. Match the holes at the end of the canoe and lace in an overcast stitch.
5. Repeat the same procedure for the opposite side of the canoe.
6. (Optional) A handle may be attached.

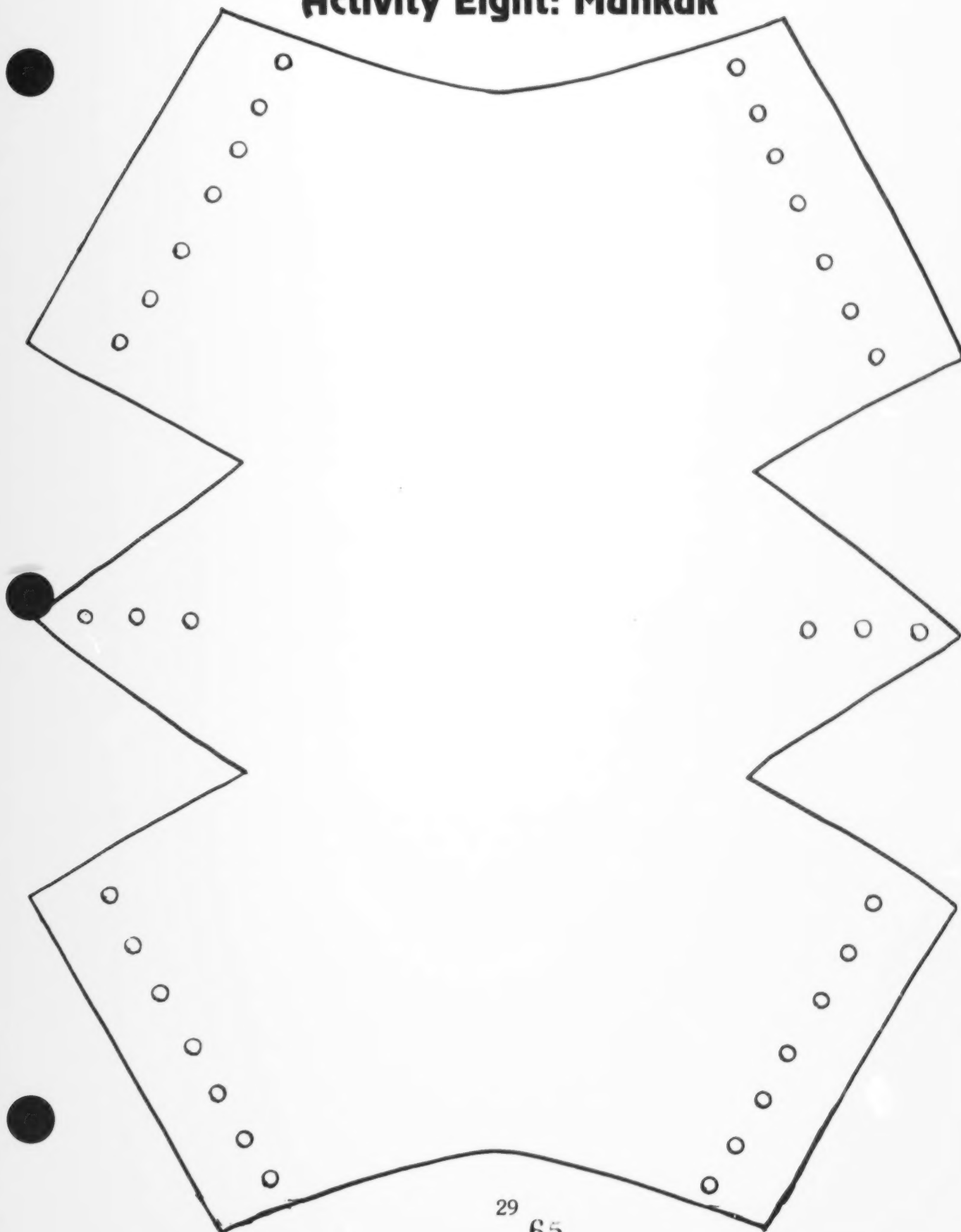


ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

1. See Section VII, Resources for examples of birch bark canoe making.
2. Punch holes along the top of the pattern as indicated in the illustration. Lace yarn through the holes in an overcast stitch. This adds a decorative touch.



Activity Eight: Muhkuk



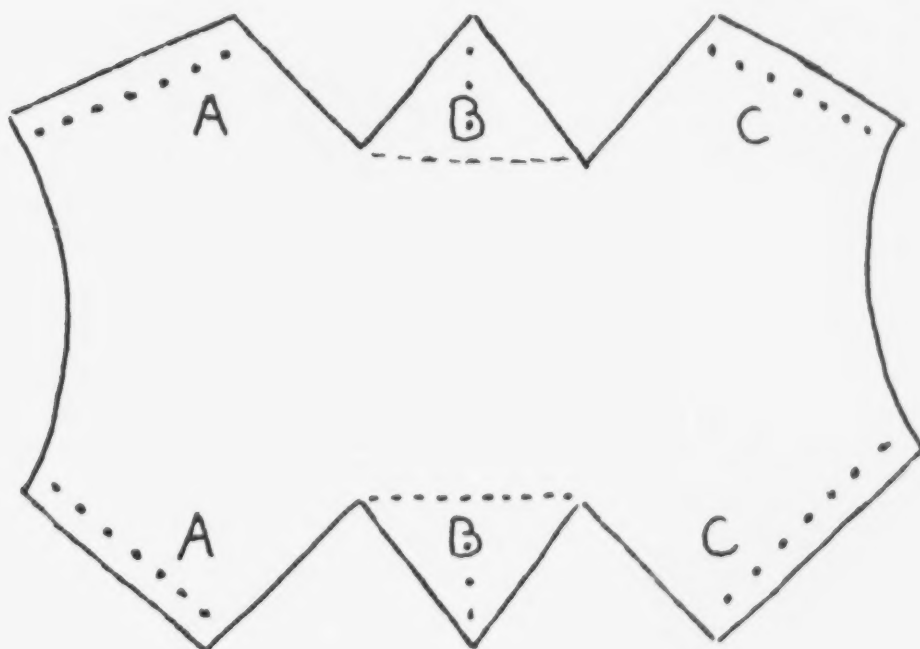
Directions for Making a Muhkuk*

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. Birch bark or tagboard for each student.
2. Leather or paper punch.
3. Yarn, two 10" pieces for each student.

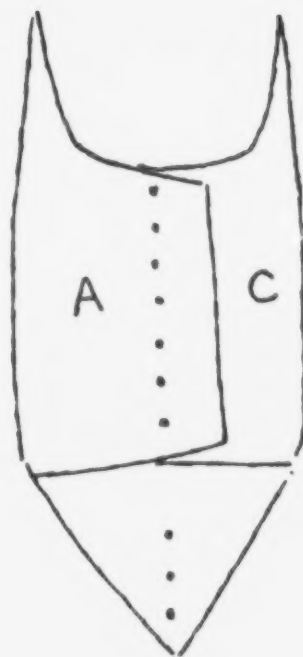
DIRECTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR TEACHERS:

1. Duplicate the pattern onto tagboard for each student.
2. If birch bark is used, trace the pattern onto bark, cut out, and punch holes where indicated.
3. Thread needle with a 10" piece of yarn and tie a knot at the end of the yarn.
4. Fold up flaps B on the dotted lines.

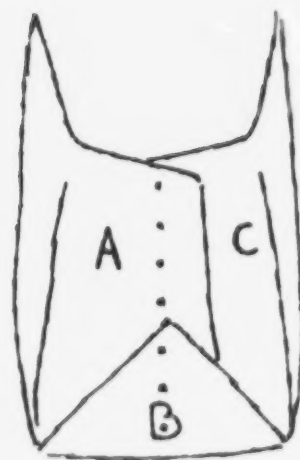


*Muhkuk (muh kuk) — an Ojibwe word meaning "container."

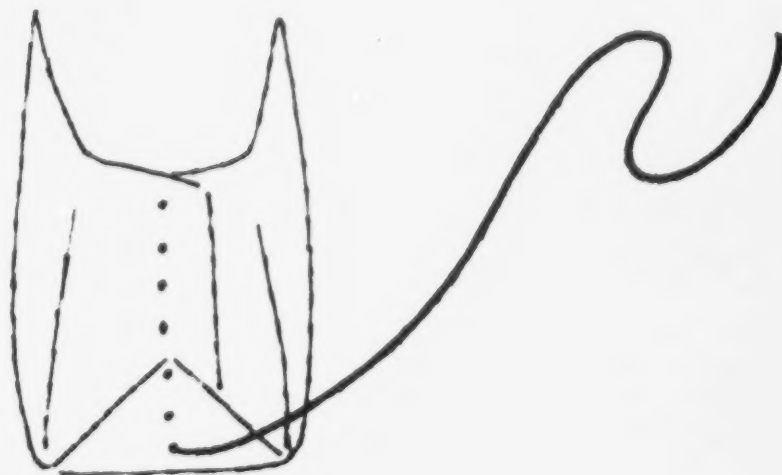
5. Fold flaps A and C together and match the corresponding holes.



6. Flap B will be on the outside of flaps A and C. Match it with the corresponding holes of flaps A and C.



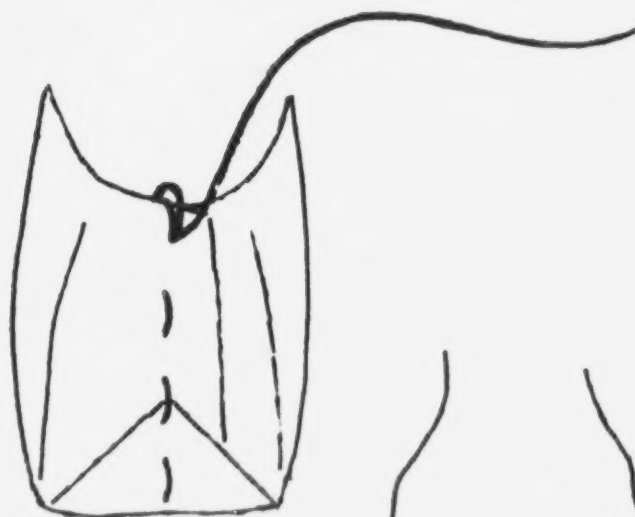
7. Starting from the inside of the mukuk, lace the yarn through the bottom corresponding holes.



8. Lace in and out through the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh holes in a running stitch.



9. The mukuk can be reinforced by lacing over the top edge and back through the seventh hole. Do not cut or tie the remaining yarn as it will be used in step 11.



10. Repeat steps three through nine for the opposite side of the mukuk.

11. Make a handle using the excess yarn from step 9. Tie the two pieces of yarn on each side together at the top. Dark lines may be drawn on the tagboard so that it resembles birch bark.

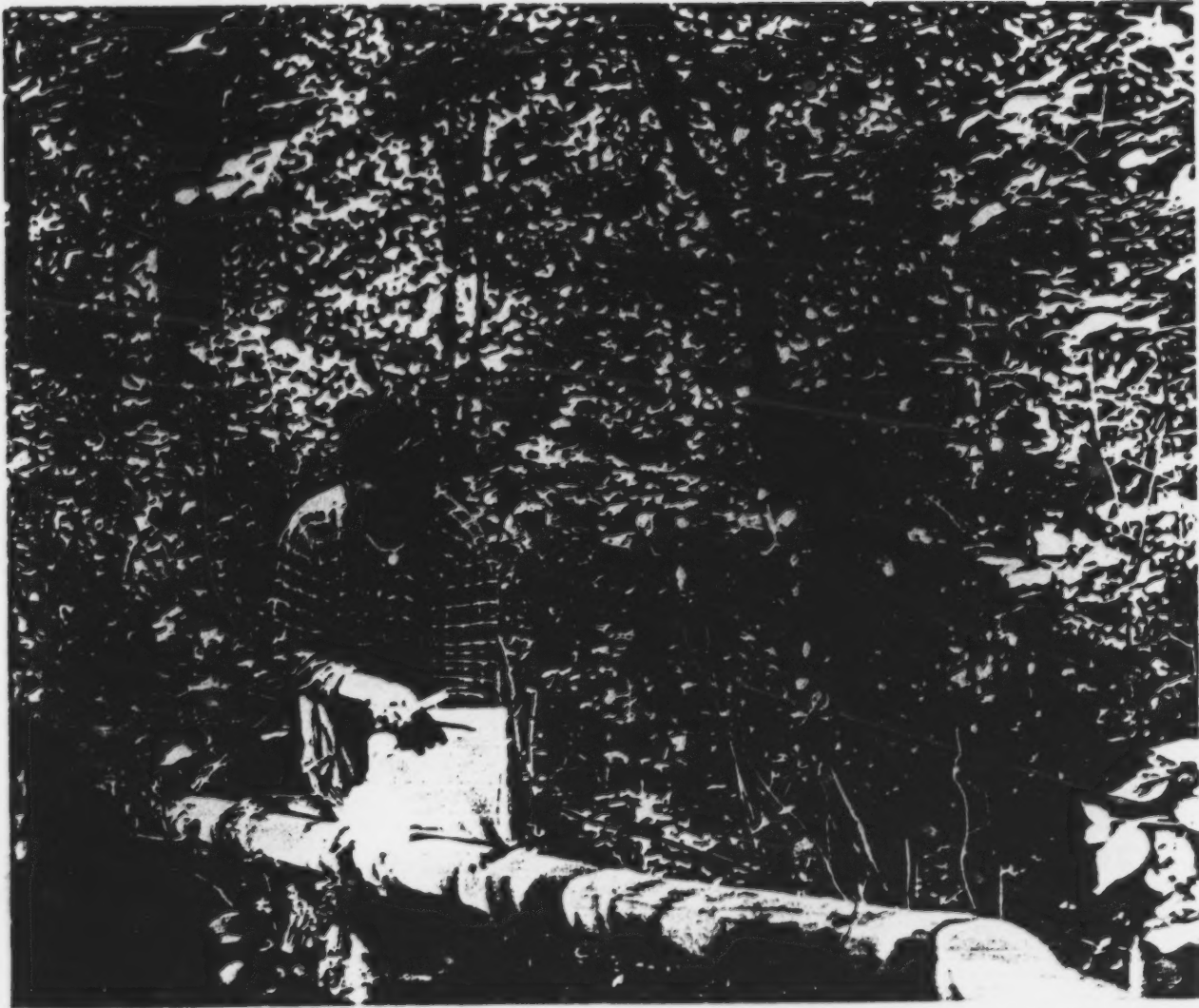


Storyteller

Ignatia Broker, the storyteller of *Weegwahsimitig*, is an enrolled member of the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota. Other legends she has retold include an origin story in *The Ojibwe — A History Resource Unit* produced by the Minnesota Historical Society and *Ahmik Nishgahdahzee* a filmstrip and poster produced by the Indian Elementary Curriculum Project. Ms. Broker has worked with schools, with a minority task force, with an audio-visual program, and with other organizations to enhance the quality of education. She is currently assisting in the development of an Indian historical society.

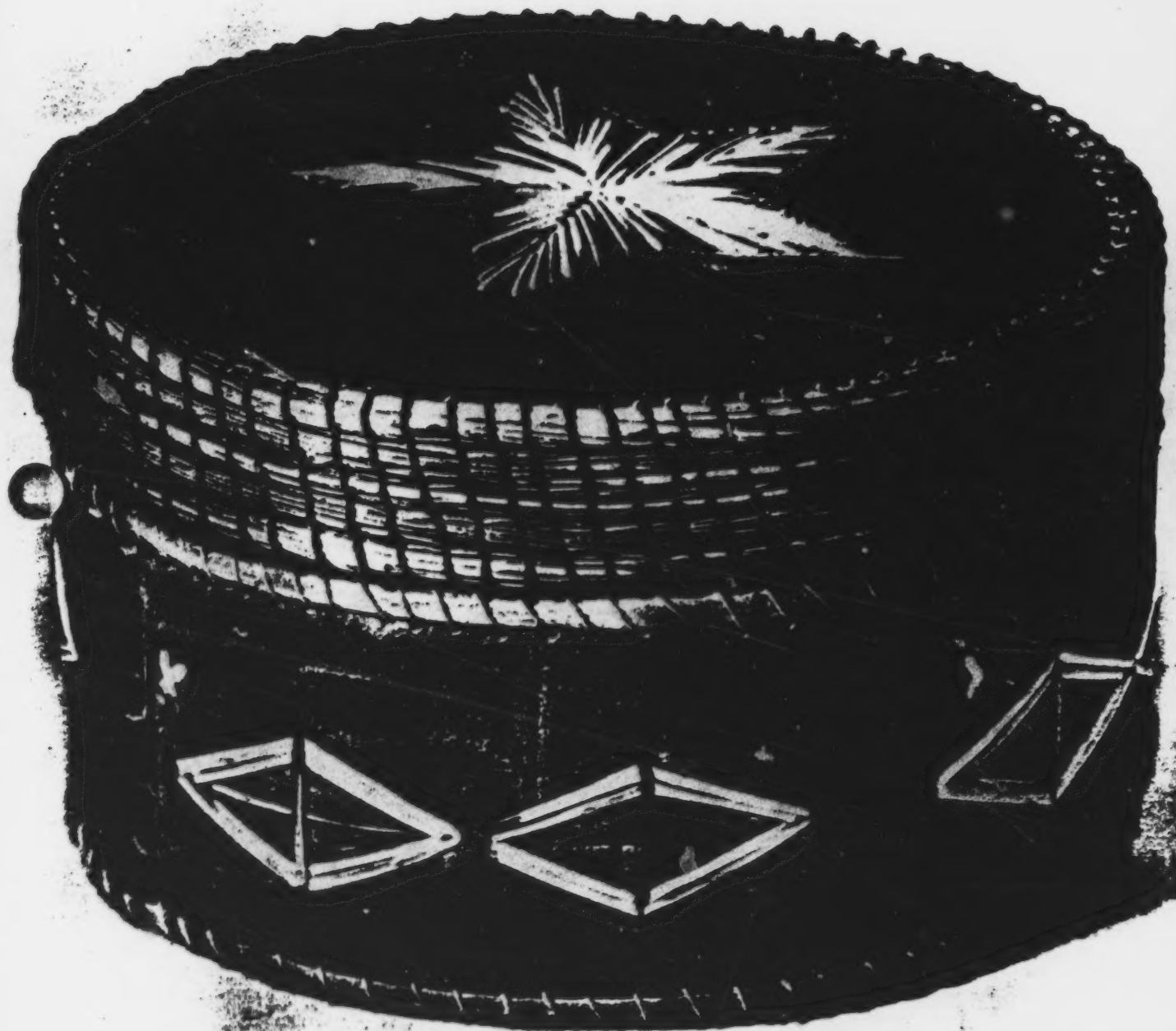
Uses of Birch Bark

Removing the Birch Bark



Photograph Courtesy of: Minnesota Historical Society

**Birch Bark Box Decorated with Porcupine
Quills and Sweet Grass.**



Photograph Courtesy of: Minnesota Historical Society

Birch Bark Basket Decorated with Porcupine Quills.



Birch Bark Hat.

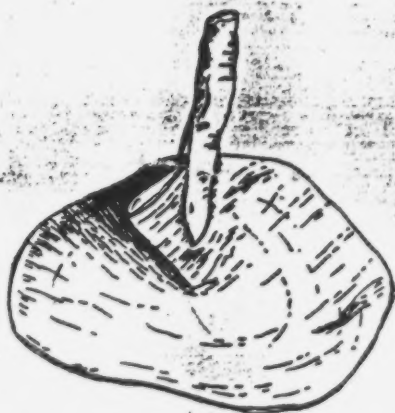


Birch Bark Baskets, Canoe and Picture Frame.

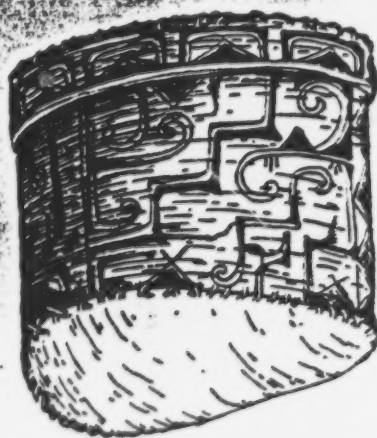


Photograph Courtesy of: Minnesota Historical Society

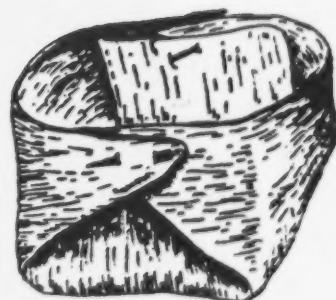
Birch Bark Baskets and Scoop.



Birch bark Scoop.



Decorated Birchbark Basket.
Algonkian Design.



Seamless Basket
(birch bark)
Eva Louise Richards.

Photograph Courtesy of: Minnesota Historical Society